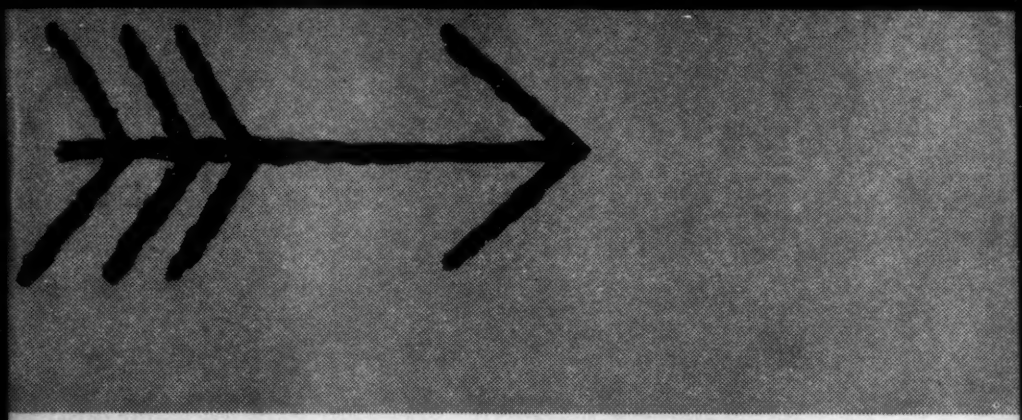
TRENDS IN EDUCATION



19

Streaming and Setting
Man—Broadcast Series
History Teaching in Europe
Immigrants and English
The Sea in Education
Coherent Secondary Education

JULY 1970

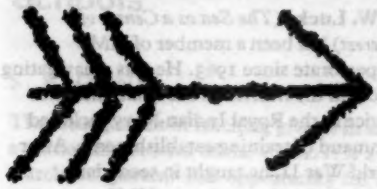
Department of Education and Science

HMSO 3s 6d [17½p] NET

Annual Subscription
16s [80p] including postage

NOT FOR SALE REF. ONLY

CONTENTS



NUMBER NINETEEN JULY 1970

Teaching Groups in Secondary Schools 3
by S. E. Gunn

Man—a Broadcast Series 9
by Malcolm Skilbeck

History in Europe's Secondary Schools 16
by E. E. Y. Hales

Pathway to English 21
by Martyn Clémans

**Immigrants—
their Languages and Development** 25
by E. Glyn Lewis

The Sea as a Centre of Interest 33
by B. W. Lucke

Coherent Secondary Education 38
by G. S. V. Petter

Talking Points
Sex Education 44
Exchange Visits 45

Books 47

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Editorial Advisory Board of Trends in Education *consists of senior officers of the Department and senior members of the Inspectorate. The Chief Information Officer is general editor, supported by an executive editor (Martyn Clémans) and an associate editor (David Hopkinson, HMI). Correspondence should be addressed to the executive editor.*

TRENDS IN EDUCATION
is produced quarterly by the Department of Education and Science, Curzon Street, London, W.1.

Published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office

Printed in England by C. Tinling & Co. Ltd., Liverpool, London and Prescot.

© *Crown copyright 1970*

Contributors

S. E. Gunn (*Teaching Groups in Secondary Schools*) taught in Sussex, Leicestershire and London, and then worked as an HM Inspector in Lancashire and in London before becoming Staff Inspector for Secondary Education in 1968.

E. E. Y. Hales (*History in Europe's Secondary Schools*) joined HM Inspectorate in 1939 after teaching history at Uppingham School. He was Staff Inspector for History from 1945 until 1966, and a Chief Inspector until his retirement in 1968.

E. Glyn Lewis (*Immigrants—their Languages and Development*) was formerly Staff Inspector for Education Research (Wales). He is chairman of the English Committee of the International Educational Achievement project and has recently completed a large scale investigation of the effects of migration among the various nationalities of the U.S.S.R. He subsequently visited the U.S.A. to attend conferences of the Association of Supervisors of Curriculum Development and to study problems of bilingual education.

B. W. Lucke (*The Sea as a Centre of Interest*) has been a member of HM Inspectorate since 1963. He was a navigating officer in the Merchant Navy and his later service in the Royal Indian Navy included command of training establishments. After World War II, he taught in secondary schools before becoming an HMI.

G. S. V. Petter (*Coherent Secondary Education*) has been a member of HM Inspectorate since 1946, with one break of two years when he was an education adviser in the West Indies. Throughout his career he has been much involved in encouraging the creative arts in schools and in further education.

Malcolm Skilbeck (*Man—a Broadcast Series*) is senior tutor for advanced studies in the University of Bristol School of Education. In 1968 the schools broadcasting department of the BBC asked him to act as educational consultant for the *Man* series of programmes.

The opinions expressed in Trends in Education *are the writers' own. They may not necessarily be in accordance with the views of the Department of Education and Science.*

Streaming . . . setting . . . banding . . . mixed ability grouping . . . a survey of current thinking and practice on a most debated subject.

Teaching Groups in Secondary Schools

S. E. GUNN

The arrangement of teaching groups in secondary schools is likely to be a persistent problem of the 1970s. It is a problem closely related to the search for genuine full opportunity for all; for an opportunity which will allow and help children to enjoy the right not to be discouraged, to work at a speed and to a breadth and depth which suits them, and to have (at all stages) a programme which meets their present needs and future ambitions. And above all they must be helped to grow up into well adjusted people. Of course, these criteria of full opportunity, however incomplete, are so stringent that a school cannot hope always to meet them all, and in so far as it does, it will need help from outside the school. But in facing this problem every school must have permanent regard to the arrangement of the teaching groups in which a secondary pupil finds himself for something like 35 to 40 periods each week.

Homogeneous or Mixed Ability?

At present most secondary teachers would seem to favour, certainly by the second or third years, some form of streaming or setting which produces classes of relatively homogeneous ability. Streaming is used here to mean attempting to arrange the pupils in any given year of a school into classes of homogeneous general ability and to teach all or most subjects to these same classes. Setting refers to a more refined process whereby for a particular subject such as mathematics pupils are grouped into homogeneous classes based upon ability in that subject. Since this will require that several classes and several teachers must work at the same time it is usually not easy to set a majority of subjects and those which have a grammatical, logical or factual foundation have usually had preference.

There is however something in the general climate of current educational thought which regrets the need for streams or sets, particularly in the early stages of secondary education, and indeed, it might be said that there is a sort of bad conscience about anything that could be described as fine streaming.

It is not easy to know where the various moods of a climate of opinion get their sanctions. As far as achievement is concerned, research appears to give no decisive answer to the broad question as between streaming and mixed ability groups. History can recount pretty clearly how the climate of opinion has changed but it gives an account only and not an explanation. The most useful lesson from history is that streaming in English schools, in so far as about three-quarters of the ability range is concerned, is not a traditional system inherited from the past. In fact it is an innovation in English education at this level made possible by the Hadow reorganisation of the late 1920s and 1930s and part of a development which went on from then until now by which most developing

secondary schools imitated the grammar schools where streaming had been common for many years.

The last of the old series of *Handbooks of Suggestions for Teachers* published by the Board of Education in 1937 and revised in 1944 advocated that schools should be at least large enough to have two streams for juniors and three for seniors. Otherwise the main residual benefit of the Hadow reorganisation could not be enjoyed. Hadow had separated junior from senior schools at 11 and consequently produced large schools with a reduced age range in which groups of common age classified on ability could be organised (for the first time on a general scale) in the schools where the majority of English children were educated. The Handbook of 1944 was quite firm in its opposition to classes containing a wide range of intelligence. It was the time when the slow implementation of Hadow was eliminating the all-age schools where the climb through standards 1–7, with promotion based on attainment, could leave several age groups in the same class. Groups based upon common age and homogeneous ability were now in favour. 'Where . . . there is a satisfactory degree of homogeneity, a community of interest is soon aroused which makes for a class spirit, for healthy rivalry among the children and for economy of effort on the part of the teacher.'

Changes in Primary Work

Just as Hadow reorganisation did much to encourage streaming in junior and senior schools so the changing practice of education, beginning with the deep changes in the primary schools have done a great deal to provoke second thoughts about it. Although *Primary Education*, published in 1959 as a successor to the old *Handbook of Suggestions*, dealt reticently with the whole matter of streaming there had clearly been a decided shift in attitude since 1944. 'Some heads . . . have in recent years changed from a streamed organisation to one which puts the whole range of ability in one class. Their experience is that in the homogeneous class . . . the stimulus to learning is reduced and that the slower children appear slower still, accepting the fact that they are too often called "only B stream", and making less effort than they might.'

It may well be that the new primary methods taking fuller account of individual needs of children and of the way they grow and learn reinforced these psychological objections to streaming, but the Newsom report, *Half Our Future* in 1963 (concerned of course with the middle ability reaches of the secondary school) found it impossible to form a collective view about streaming in the absence of 'detailed investigation'. In any case, said Newsom, 'Judgement must start where the practice starts—in the primary school.' Justifiably perhaps, Newsom could avoid the issue—its main concern was with pupils who for the most part were in three or four form entry secondary modern schools. It was thought, said the report, that the head of such a school was likely to stream on ability or, in the case of a four form entry school, to 'top and tail', that is to have top and bottom streams and two parallel forms in the middle. However, the general problem of ability grouping did not bulk large in Newsom and the report sums up its view (it was somehow anxious to off-load responsibility upon the primary school) thus, 'the head will certainly be aware that "streaming", which starts well down in the primary schools, is a matter of acute educational controversy'.

Two books published at about this time brought systematically into the

professional and public discussion of teaching groups most of the main factors which have contributed to the current bad conscience about fine streaming. Dr. J. W. B. Douglas *The Home and the School* (1964) thought that a majority of primary teachers accepted streaming by ability as educationally sound and concluded that grouping by ability did 'not make an appreciable difference to the average level of performance'. But he also emphasised some psychological drawbacks in streaming: its finality, its self-fulfilling tendencies and its reinforcement of 'the process of social selection'. In the same year (1964) Dr. Stephen Wiseman's *Education and Environment* threw more light on the process of social selection and upon the knowledge 'that educational attainments are somehow related to social class and to economic status'.

By 1966 the Plowden report *Children and their Primary Schools* was clearly in sympathy with unstreaming largely because it was consistent with the best primary practices and because it tends to produce 'a happy school and an atmosphere conducive to learning'. Plowden also emphasised the importance of underlying teachers' attitudes as being of greater consequence than organisational devices.

This last point emerges again in the recently published National Foundation for Educational Research project *Streaming in the Primary School* which, again, concludes that streaming or non-streaming makes no decisive difference to the average academic performance of children of comparable ability and social class, but reinforces many of the arguments against streaming which stress its finality, its effect upon pupil and teacher expectation and consequently upon motivation, its lack of precision in assigning children to streams and its reinforcement of social privilege or deprivation.

At Secondary Level

It remains a difficulty that much that has been written refers mainly to the primary years, and that once again the implementation of a large scale organisational reform in the secondary system is demanding solutions to this practical problem of teaching groups in the absence of conclusive answers to many of the questions involved. Just as the Hadow reforms conspired to achieve streaming in the senior schools, so Circular 10/65 and the growth of large comprehensive schools has made straightforward fine streaming an improbable organisation particularly in urban areas, not only because it is almost impossible to achieve such precise grouping but also because of the formidable task confronting a teacher with the bottom stream of, say, a twelve-form entry school.

However the present climate of opinion with its suspicion of early decisions, its dislike of categories placed upon children and its insistent demand for full opportunity for all, including the socially deprived, affects the secondary schools equally with the primary. It is also certain that the many reservations about selection at 11, based upon measurement of intelligence, and changes in our knowledge about the relative impacts of heredity and environment upon measured intelligence have helped to implant doubts about the decisions and the predictions involved in streaming and setting in the secondary school. But such bad conscience as exists about fine streaming has not so far caused any large scale movement in secondary schools towards any form of complete unstreaming or total mixed ability grouping over even the first three years, the years that is, before options for more specialised courses based upon external examination syllabuses begin to determine the

construction of teaching groups. There are now many secondary schools with unstreamed first years and this is perhaps the main response on a national scale to current knowledge about the effects of streaming.

Broad Banding

This unstreamed first year is often referred to as a diagnostic year; it is a breathing space for discussion and assessments of pupil needs and it defers for a year whatever inevitable decisions about placement in ability groupings must eventually be made. It also allows an easier transition from primary to secondary ways. There are very few secondary schools however where unstreamed groups containing the whole range of ability continue for a full three years, though some schools now continue into the second and third year with unstreamed forms which are setted in some subjects. Indeed, the commonest pattern at present particularly in large schools is for some arrangement of broad-banding to be achieved, sometimes in the first year and sometimes later with the possibility of setting within each band, usually for the 'sequence' or 'structure' subjects such as foreign languages, mathematics or science. Thus a ten form entry school having withdrawn a group of 30 for remedial work might divide the rest into three broad bands with three classes of parallel ability in each band, each containing about 30 per cent of the ability range. The system has the practical advantage of giving each class about the ability range to which teachers in non-selective schools have been accustomed and of providing opportunities for either setting in particular subjects within bands (most schools can manage to timetable three teachers in one subject at the same time) or indeed to provide blocks of time for experiments such as team teaching.

In large schools broad banding and setting makes a very involved pattern but it is this organisation which in the 1970s will compete with those who support mixed ability groups. The broad banders and setters would claim that they avoid much of the deterrent psychological consequences of streaming on general ability, that they accept the impossibility of fine streaming and substitute a more practical aim, that they do not ask teachers to face a range of ability for which they are not equipped and that by setting in the 'structure' subjects they adapt the approach more closely to the needs of children of different abilities.

Mixed Ability Groups

The supporters of mixed ability groups (and they extend far beyond the schools which have adopted this organisation) would challenge all these points. They would maintain that the dividing lines between bands easily become curricular boundaries which are not often crossed; that selection for bands can be only imperfectly achieved and that these dividing lines must sometimes attempt the impossible task of separating children in the middle ranges of ability where the spread is least and division most difficult; that the banding itself and certainly the setting may well produce the reduced expectations which undermine motivation and consequently counteract the advantage of the homogeneous groups. The basic classes within the broad bands tend also to be the social unit for pastoral purposes and in the first year they may well provide a secure setting for the pupil to settle in his new large school and establish his pattern of contacts with other children and with adults. As time goes on, however, and if many subjects are setted (and English, foreign languages, mathematics, science and even history and

geography are those which sometimes ask to be setted) an organisation of great complexity emerges in which an hourly reshuffling of teaching groups takes place, involving a great deal of movement, a loss of stability for the pupil and the need for communications which may be so involved as to be less than effective.

A large school with mixed ability teaching groups, even for the first three years only, not only eliminates the restlessness which may emerge from the hourly reshuffling of classes, it also achieves the simplicity of organisation which allows an identification of teaching with social and pastoral groups which was one of the advantages of the old, small, streamed schools. This in its turn reduces the complexity of patterns of communication. The problem of whether to set and in which subjects becomes an acute problem, partly because the mixed ability groupers are likely to dislike setting anyway and also because there is no definitive evidence about the degrees of homogeneity required to teach particular subjects successfully. There are already some schools where mixed ability groups are mitigated by a minimum of setting, usually in mathematics and French, but neither this departure from ultimate principle nor that involved in choice of subjects for options in the fourth year, or perhaps in the choice of pupils for a second foreign language in the third year, does much to spoil the stable simplicity of the basic organisation. It is noticeable that those who want mixed ability groups will often avoid early decisions or special choices or any other limitations upon opportunity to the extent of wanting to maintain an absolutely common curriculum for as long as possible. It may well be that we shall discover during the 1970s that a somewhat simpler common curriculum not only fosters greater equality of opportunity but also solves some of the problems about early specialisation and examinations to which we are at present finding more complicated answers. To return however, to the fact that mixed ability groups make possible a simple identification of teaching and tutor (or pastoral) groups—there cannot be much doubt that this has great merits in enabling children to adjust themselves easily to school life—though some may say the price to be paid for this is too high.

Towards a Compromise

It is probably wise not to allow the dialogue to polarise by allowing non-streaming to be seen as a system which accepts academic disadvantages (and lower or slower achievements) in pursuit of a higher social good, whereas the streamers (or broad banders and setters) arrange homogeneous teaching groups which will achieve academic success at the price of some social, psychological or community disadvantage.

Such polarisation of the arguments is regrettable, partly because the reality seems to be much more complex than this and partly because the eventual practical outcome is much more likely to be a compromise in which a good deal of mixed ability grouping, and some more homogeneous groups to cater for inevitable curricular choices, will co-exist with the help of a really adequate system of guidance bearing upon such special options as must be made, e.g. for particular aspects of some subjects such as mathematics or for minority subjects. In the absence of decisive evidence it is very difficult to show that any subject cannot be successfully taught in mixed ability groups or that such teaching cannot be successful at any particular stage. This is an area of great difficulty in which argument is usually based upon the pretty

solid ground of experience, but there is now a growing amount of experience in unstreamed, unsettled secondary schools which it is claimed shows that the most able do not under-achieve and that the main problems are sometimes encountered not with the most able but with the least able. It is difficult however to assemble conclusive evidence in this sort of matter, and we badly need to assemble not only this, but also evidence which would help in deciding whether it is really practicable to teach 'sequence' subjects to groups of inevitably normal size of about 30, and covering a very wide range of ability.

Just as during the last ten years we have amassed a good deal of knowledge of the motivational, psychological and organisational factors involved in achieving homogeneous groups, so, now we are beginning to know a great deal more about the various factors involved in teaching mixed ability groups and there is no doubt that these factors cover some important and interesting teaching problems some of which have been obscured by traditional class teaching techniques.

These traditional techniques become for many purposes inadequate in the new situation. The teacher is faced with a large group of individuals and only under special circumstances can he treat them collectively. Whatever his approach, groups will tend to form up in the classroom and these to some will be suspect as concealed streaming and to others they will be friendship groups involving a stable and comfortable means of security for pupils and capable of helping to achieve a sound motivational response to teaching. There is obviously an important field for investigation in all this but we know already that the teacher with a mixed ability group must make quite sophisticated teaching arrangements if he is to keep 30 pupils happy and usefully occupied.

On the whole children in mixed ability group classes, though most subjects offer something that can be done collectively, will be working at something like individual programmes of work. They will often collect into groups to do this but it is rare to find these groups doing anything which could be regarded as genuine group activity except under special conditions such as when a team teaching operation is underway, or in some practical subjects such as housecraft. The whole matter of assessment and recording assessment loses the traditional structural norms and becomes a much more individual matter. School examinations on a large scale cease to have an obvious usefulness and examination practice for those who eventually face external public examinations becomes a problem. The almost permanent in-service training by discussion and by formal meetings is an urgent corollary to the high degree of innovation which goes on in schools which are largely in mixed ability groups. The knowledge and the experience of new techniques and new problems which are emerging is a valuable by-product of the experiments but it must be admitted (and squarely faced) that a very heavy strain is placed upon teachers in the formative years of the new system. In spite of this there are already schools where most of the teachers have come knowing that mixed ability groups are in operation and where the turnover of staff is below average.

The many problems involved in this discussion go deeper and wider than this article can take them. On present evidence, conclusions are difficult but it is unlikely that present trends in secondary education will allow us not to face squarely one of our basic problems—how to constitute the teaching groups in the secondary schools.

The author was commissioned by the BBC to act as consultant to this series of broadcasts to schools. In the article he describes and evaluates the project.

Man—a Broadcast Series

MALCOLM SKILBECK

The School Broadcasting Service of the BBC provides a very wide range of broadcasts to schools, at all levels, mostly in series of one year's duration. A one year series, broadcast once a week, consists of some thirty programmes. Although broadcasts are normally thought to be ancillary to class teaching, an adjunct to the syllabus, or even just the means of a quiet time for the teacher, a series can constitute a central curriculum theme for a year's work. Serious thought is now being given by broadcasters to the idea that a year-long series itself can become the centre of a curriculum 'package', comprising the broadcasts themselves, teachers' guides, work books or assignment cards for pupils, further references, and ancillary materials, e.g. film loops, slides, charts, etc., etc.

The subject of this paper is a one year series entitled *Man*, for ten to twelve year old children. It was devised in 1968 to replace the long-running *How Things Began*, for broadcasting in the 1968/69 school year. *Man* was conceived as a package that could be taken either in parts to supplement whatever social studies work a school had already planned, or as a free standing core of integrated activity. The autonomy of the series in this respect was emphasised by the preparation of three substantial teachers' guides, one for each term. These guides outlined the objectives of the whole scheme, pointed up the key ideas, summarized the content of the broadcasts and supplied additional explanatory material, listed a wide range of additional source material, and invited teachers to choose from a very comprehensive range of follow-up activities. A second stage in the development of the series is expected to include the preparation of film loops and topic assignment cards or activity folders for pupils.

The opportunity that the BBC has to develop and diffuse new approaches to the curriculum is heightened by the media impact, its ability to draw expert teams together quickly to produce material, and the freedom schools have to choose to use new approaches. But this very freedom means that any major innovating agency has largely to make its own way, trying to convince teachers by argument that new ideas are worth trying out. To be effective this requires a network of diffusion agents and a substantial resource allocation and it is here that the time and money given to developing a new series is often quite inadequate.

The *Man* series is an example of the attempt, not merely to provide supplementary materials, but actively to promote certain of the newer curriculum concepts in the nation's schools. In this attempt the programme designers were aware that there is great diversity in primary school social studies and that new and powerful schools of thought on desirable directions for these studies have developed in recent years.

A variety of objectives were adopted. The first of these was to produce a series expressing the 'structural' and 'inquiry' approaches of contemporary social studies theory. From this it follows that teachers should be persuaded to initiate structured inquiries as distinct from unsystematic discovery on the one hand and didactic instruction on the other.

In addition to this comprehensive, procedural objective, the main substantive objectives were (defined as children's understandings):

1. To understand selected interrelations of all forms of life and of all forms of life to the environment, through an exploration of selected episodes in the evolution of living things and of the development of human culture.
2. To understand the birth and growth of consciousness, through man's manipulation of his environment and in terms of his religion, art, social relationships, and work.
3. To acquire a conceptual framework for culture analysis comprising expressive art, religion, ritual and myth, tool making and use, language, social and work relationships, and patterns of child growth.
4. To develop sympathetic awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity, mainly through a functional approach to beliefs and living patterns.
5. To begin to understand the interpretations and the unity of the various cultural sciences, from biology to value theory.
6. To begin to learn how to undertake value analysis in a manner that blends tolerance, sympathy and detachment, with personal engagement.
7. To acquire skills of inquiry, including individual and group-initiated activities, skills of listening and summating, reading, note-taking, discussing and multi-media presentation of ideas.

These are very broad aims and they are by no means exhaustive. They will be referred to again in the discussion of 'Assessment'.

Teaching and Learning Units

These objectives may be developed into teaching-learning units in two steps, first, a more general statement of the scope and form of subject matter presented in each term, and, second, a more specific although necessarily highly selective discussion of particular features of the broadcast materials. The more general statement of the scope of subject matter is contained in the teacher's notes for the autumn term 1968:

> The autumn term will start with what we know of the formation of the earth and the changes that took place on it before life began. It explains the evidence by which we know about the past, and traces the development of life from rudimentary forms through marine creatures and reptiles to mammals. It deals with early man, and the emergence of true man. It ends with the dawn of man's awareness of his own nature, and his first great achievements which formed the basis for later development.

Throughout the year, the device of a time traveller was employed. In a relaxed, friendly manner he invited the children to enter imaginatively into the life and times and places he visited. Children in one class when asked to try to visualise him mostly chose words like 'guide', 'friendly

advisor', 'older brother' (he was also thought to be 'stout' to have 'black hair', and 'a little beard'!).

Periods and themes observed, identified, and discussed in the first term included:

the formation of the earth;
land before the emergence of life;
the first stirring of life, all of which were discussed non-teleologically (although the question-begging term 'designs for living' was used several times).

No reference at all was made to religious accounts of the beginnings of life. The explanatory framework was that of informed conjecture, adapted from recent scientific literature, in terms of electrical and chemical processes. Religious myths did appear later (e.g. Egyptians, Bushmen).

Topics in subsequent broadcasts were:

Life in Ordovician and Devonian seas, including a dramatic portrayal of a fringe-finned fish heaving itself onto a bank;
Amphibian life in an Upper Carboniferous swamp;
Transition from amphibious to reptilian life (explained in Darwinian terms);
Dinosaurs;
Mammals (including an account of the theory of evolution using the classic example of eohippus);
Brain, eye and hand.

The term ended with three broadcasts marking the emergence of man and his first cultural strivings. Children were invited to consider the imaginative and intellectual significance of three fundamental discoveries and inventions: fire, tool making and communication through language.

The first term thus attempted to organise vast amounts of material through a few relatively simple but powerful ideas: process and change, evolution, adaptation, environmental interaction, cultural schemata. In the second and third terms, the same basic pattern was adopted, of a foreground of interesting and exciting events imaginatively reconstructed, and a background of simple, powerful explanation. This background could be thought of as a 'cultural map', comprising on the cognitive side:

1. the significance of religious experience and ritual for workaday life and emotional integration;
2. the extension of mind and muscle through tools;
3. social interdependence in primary and secondary groups, and the concept of division of labour;
4. the experience and social values of art and language and their grounding in human experience;
5. relationships between forms of child care and patterns of growth.

For the evocation and education of feelings and values, there was also a 'map' but it was not so clearly conceived. Recurring themes were intended to evoke a sympathetic appreciation of the diversity of cultural experiences, and to lead children to develop a personal life style harmonious with a wide variety of different life styles. There was of course

no direct 'instruction' along these lines, but an atmosphere was built up in which certain values were predominant; open-mindedness, tolerance, compassion, love, courage, fortitude, liberty.

The content of the second term's work comprised, first, the life style of early man (the pervasive ideology of the hunter) and his inventiveness, including his 'invention' of the town as a pattern of organised group living. This was followed by two programmes on selected elements in the culture of pre-dynastic and early dynastic Egypt: language and the role of the scribe; and the hierarchical structure of the kingdom at the time of Tutankhamen. In the second half of the term, there were five broadcasts on the environment and culture of a contemporary bushmen group.

The bushmen broadcasts exemplified the great care taken over verisimilitude throughout the series: authentic music and language, and the involvement in scripting of anthropologists with personal experience of the bushmen.

In the third term, another contemporary culture was selected for investigation, neither the sophisticated West European or American model, nor the 'innocent' or 'primitive' model of the bushmen, but a culture in transition, a hypothetical South Indian village. Feeling the stirrings of western style modernization in the form of improved seed, fertilizers, and tractors, the villagers were still dominated in family relations, religion, art, and the workaday round by the traditions of conservative Hinduism. In an attempt to secure a stronger personal involvement, the listening children were invited to follow the fortune of a family through childbirth, monsoon, harvest, the school-work transition, festival, and pilgrimage. Then two themes from the life of Ghandi were presented: his experience of colour discrimination as a young lawyer in South Africa, and his leadership of the 'Satyagrahas' in the famous salt march of 1930. The final broadcast of the year was based on examples of children's work, carried out in response to the series in different parts of the country.

Resources for Teaching and Learning

This in bare outline is the subject matter of the year's work. Its final form was achieved by preliminary discussion by the programme designers of fundamental conceptions of 'approach' or 'style' or 'theme' in social studies, a review of children's learning strategies, the defining of objectives, the adoption of a conceptual scheme for the exploratory analysis of culture, and a systematic search through readily available literature for illuminating materials, from the most ancient past to those of the present day. Contributions were made by university and museum specialists in the different subject areas, educational consultants, technical experts, producers, and a script writer.

However, the broadcasts were only part of the 'package'. Ancillary written materials were prepared for both pupils and teachers. In preparing these several assumptions were made: (1) that for the pupils a radio series needed visual supplementation, to give a reality bearing to imaginative experience; and an inquiry model required questions to be set and interspersed amongst the informative picture captions in the pupils' pamphlets; (2) that for the teachers there had to be a rationale, a content outline including additional specialist information (e.g. on bushmen) a guide to relevant activities for pupils to undertake, and

substantial bibliographies and lists of additional sources of information and materials.

Assessment

The *Man* broadcasts were received by more than 2,000 schools—100,000 children or more, yet there is no provision for large scale controlled surveys of the impact of school broadcasting. Assessment must therefore be highly subjective, resting on reports by BBC Education Officers in the regions, the expressed reactions of teachers, theoretical considerations, and the experience of the author who sought a fuller understanding of children's use of broadcast material by taking a class of children in a city primary school for a year's broadcasts and follow-up work.

Taking the objectives of the series first, one criticism is that the explicit pursuit of comprehensive goals of intellectual growth led to an overestimation of the rational interests and the integrating and organising powers of the average ten- and eleven-year old. As a corollary, non-cognitive goals received inadequate direct consideration, although they did guide the determination of content and 'atmosphere' in the broadcasts themselves. Furthermore, teachers were actively encouraged to get children talking, writing freely, painting and modelling, dancing, miming, music-making, collecting, and counting, according to their own interest as stimulated by the broadcasts. The point here is that children very readily became immersed in the foreground and appeared only partially to apprehend, where they saw it at all, the 'structure-strategy' framework.

Further evidence of what might have been excessively heavy demands on the cognitive side is provided by conceptual richness and diversity and the language of the broadcasts themselves. One teacher wrote of 'an overwhelming amount of material to be sorted out and explained and used in one hour a week', and the multiplicity of activities suggested in the teachers' notes (with the expectation that teachers would select where appropriate to suit the needs of their particular children) may have confirmed this feeling of 'too much'.

The language of the broadcasts raised many problems, as indeed does any spoken or written material put directly before children. It was decided to use a simplified but still strongly technical vocabulary and inevitably words and constructions used were sometimes outside the experience of most children, e.g. from the first term: 'descent', 'amphibian', 'tropical forest', 'tree fern', 'ancestor', 'gills', 'evolving', 'spore dust', 'environment'. These words and many others like them were heard only, and perhaps only once.

Words, of course, mean ideas and a major objective of any social studies programme is to increase the range and manipulative power of children's ideas. A major impact medium, like broadcasting, provides the opportunity for the growth of thought, both rational and associative, but it cannot complete the job, or very easily reinforce specific learnings.

The excitement occasioned by any new curriculum package, and by discovery and inquiry methods, should not blind us to the continuing need for study of and reflection on organised bodies of knowledge and for ongoing reinforcement of these learnings. In the *Man* series, lots of encouragement was given to teachers and children to sustain their

inquiries: 'let's see', 'let's find out', 'what does this mean?', 'why should this be so?', 'how do we know?', etc. However, incitements to action are one thing, and unless teachers are able to organise and reinforce this multifaceted type of inquiry, a situation could quickly develop in which only the few were inquiring while the many were simply being bombarded by more or less pleasant sensations, basking in a pedagogical version of James' 'blooming, buzzing confusion'!

The vast journeys made through time in the first and second term invited difficulty. There is evidence to suggest that children are very easily muddled by backward and forward time switches and that 'historical pace' is a concept not readily attained before adolescence. Where a time traveller is leaping backwards and forward, perhaps several times in a single broadcast, a simple signal system is needed to denote the direction of this movement, as in the visual symbols BC and AD (themselves confusing enough if children are asked to jump quickly from one to the other). Another problem is that common numerals can be very confusing: three may always be three but a further imaginative effort is required to mark the difference between three-thousand and three-million. Dates and time periods are in themselves not historical data at all, and only become so when associated with particular events or ideas, which in turn become usable only when linked together in sequences, periods, epochs, etc. Thus the important point in pre-history is not the sheer succession of time as such, but that great changes occur in or over time. Even to establish clear rational associations, e.g. of the succession and interaction of events—that town life depended on fundamental discoveries and inventions in agriculture and in turn promoted an agricultural technology—requires a multi-media approach, in which pupils can make intellectual discoveries, guided by time charts, systems diagrams, information saturation and, not least, sustained discussion.

Not only pupils but also teachers need guidance with these vast sweeps of subject matter. It is unrealistic to suppose that this problem can be met by providing massive bibliographies and suggestions for further study, although some of the interpretative overview studies are very useful. Furthermore, exponents of 'inquiry' methods do not seem to have succeeded yet in showing just how children are to be given some insight into the exact arts of inquiry when their own teachers are not skilled researchers. Again, perhaps an answer will be provided by a multi-disciplinary effort by human and social scientists to produce popular 'models' of inquiry strategies. There is here a task for the curriculum development teams engaged in Schools Council projects.

Specific to the broadcast medium is the question what are children doing when listening? Some teachers use this opportunity to train their pupils in the skills of note-taking. More subtle approaches might be adopted, e.g. teaching them to concentrate by asking them to recount in unemotive language a particular episode, one which they might find distasteful, like the use of slaves in pyramid building or betrothal customs of traditional Hinduism.

Then there is the problem of devising suitable content for pamphlets for children. Should these be designed primarily to extend imagination, to add a visual to the aural dimension, or should they more nearly resemble work-books? As a result of the experience of this series it has been decided to break with the predominantly visual approach on

the grounds that there is little 'visual starvation' in schools where there are usually plenty of sources of illustrations, but that there is a need to develop a more systematic approach to subject matter which can very easily become superficial and merely entertaining. Instead of picture books, the pupil pamphlets may become work-books or assemblages of assignment cards, each card possibly illustrated with a line drawing, diagram, photograph, etc., and composed of sets of data, references, questions, puzzles, and problems, and suggestions for further activity. The questions will seek to reinforce the underlying structure of the whole series, e.g. in a card on some aspect of natural environment simple deductive questions might be built around the ideas of place, climate, land-form, rocks, and minerals, soils, plants, animals and time. Or a card on contrasting 'modern' and 'primitive' outlooks on the world would seek to stress through questions the key and basic ideas of limited want satisfaction under heavy pressure of environment, contrasted with what Jules Henry in *Culture against Man* calls 'the deliberate creation of needs' in advanced Western society. Whether cards can be produced expressing ideas that are elementary in the two senses of fundamental and within the grasp of ordinary children is a question that has yet to be answered. The cards will at least attempt to express the elements of critical thinking.

The last word must be with the children themselves. The evidence from various sources indicates that great enthusiasm was evoked especially by the more personal and dramatic episodes. The activities which the broadcasts and programme notes stimulated the children to engage in ranged very widely, taking in almost every aspect of experience available in the modern primary classroom. Children enjoyed the personal and family sketches and identified readily wherever people were named and portrayed in typical human situations: playing, teasing, fearing, chatting, making, growing up. They liked the multiple senses of 'location' as a geographical, historical and personal concept. Make-believe was less popular and where children were asked to close their eyes or join the narrator in the various scrapes he got into, their enthusiasm dampened. The telling of the great Indian myth, the Ramayana, in the course of the Indian broadcasts, introduced the fancifulness of a bridge of monkeys, chariots, demons and magical powers, which many older children accustomed to TV space spectaculars find less than enthralling. However, it also produced very vivid art work and drama.

Whether as a result of this kind of study children are brought significantly into the procedures of 'concept mapping' and 'inquiry strategies' remains doubtful. They may be capable of these more adult enterprises but the effort required to sustain them in their skills may be beyond the scope of the teacher in the ordinary classroom. However, bringing children nearer to the verge of 'initiation' by sensing that there are ways of organising social data for the testing of hypotheses and the classification of concepts, is itself a big step forward. The *Man* series does seem to have contributed here and it may be regarded as a forerunner of a more systematic but no less creative and imaginative approach to primary school social studies than has been common in recent years.

An abridged version of the inaugural address to a conference called by the Council of Europe at Brunswick in September 1969, to consider the teaching of history to pupils aged eleven to sixteen. Mr. Hales had been invited to comment on the replies he had received from the Ministers of Education of European countries to a questionnaire on methods and syllabuses.*

History in Europe's Secondary Schools

E. E. Y. HALES

There are at least six important problems that seem to emerge from the very painstaking replies you have made or your Governments have made to the questionnaire sent to you on history teaching in your different countries. Paradoxes might be a better word than problems. It is not a question of difference of outlook between country and country, but a conflict of principle running through most of the replies, and often to be found running through the same reply.

The first paradox arises out of the enormous claims made for the importance of the teaching of history. In the reply given by the Flemish-speaking part of Belgium we are told that the object of history teaching is to enable pupils to understand the human situation, to understand the problems of humanity, and to understand how to acquire a sense of the relative importance of things and to teach the pupil to exercise judgment and acquire an idea of time and space. Likewise the reply from Turkey says that the aim is to enable pupils to understand the deep roots of our present culture, to stimulate their love and respect for mankind, and to show them the relations between the natural environment and human life so that they behave in a balanced way; it will also train them as citizens who will keep pace with the rapid development of modern life. In the reply from Ireland we are told that the aim of history teaching is, amongst other things, to accustom the pupil to the notion of change in human affairs, and so equip him for life, as well as to explain to him the present by reference to the past and thus provide him with a background for the study of current affairs and a basis for international understanding.

These views are representative of those generally expressed by the different governments; there is nothing exceptional about them, and they all suggest that the study of history is of absolutely fundamental importance. Yet against this we find that the time available for the study of history, on the programme of school studies, is in fact generally quite small, and that even this small time allowance is always tending to diminish. Thus we find that the usual time allowance, in most countries, is only about two lessons a week of 45 minutes each, and we find also that in some cases—and here I must quote both England and

* A report on this conference (CCC/EGT (69) 37) has been issued by the Council of Europe.

Scotland—history is only an optional study with older pupils in the age group we are considering, and in the case of Sweden and Denmark the international study in which the subject is embodied is likewise an optional subject. We also find the Swedish reply complaining that the time allowance is tending to diminish.

Here then is my first paradox. How are we to explain the fact that history is on the one hand the subject which contributes most importantly to human understanding and human relationships and, on the other hand, one which is allowed very little time on the teaching programme, and time that is tending to diminish rather than to increase?

I turn now to my second paradox. The questionnaire asked how much attention was given to local history, and I felt that the replies, from a number of countries, suggested that some governments were a little pained to be asked such an irrelevant question. They seemed to feel it was surprising that anybody should suppose it was important to study local history when the subject is concerned with such wide-ranging European and world problems. Yet here is the paradox. In the replies to the question which asked what *methods* of study are usually adopted, we find reference to such matters as 'pupil involvement' 'simple research' 'reference books' 'activity methods' 'depth studies' 'projects' 'enquiries' or 'the use of varied materials'; such methods seem to be generally considered the most desirable and progressive; but surely they can best be adopted when we are studying local history rather than any other kind of history? It is with local history that pupils can readily involve themselves in looking at buildings or manuscripts or museums or pictures, plans or maps; if an important aim of history study is to involve the pupil personally in the evidence surely he should devote some of his time to local history, where such methods lie to hand, and we should continue to take seriously the claims of local history even with the older pupils?

National, European, or World History?

The third paradox arises from replies to the question: what attention is given to national, European, and world history? The general trend suggests that there is in most countries an increasing amount both of European and of world history being taught, and the various plans for the future envisage that even more attention will be given to such history as opposed to purely national history. Yet the replies also suggest that pupils should, so far as possible, work from the evidence that is available, e.g. in the form of newspaper articles, documents or the buildings that they see around them. All this is much more easily done in their own language and in their own country, and so the Scottish reply states—with some reason it seems to me—that there are still serious doubts in that country about the wisdom of devoting much of the syllabus to European or to world history because the evidences and the languages of such history are not so easily available or so easily understandable; and I might add that I think that in England this is one of the main considerations which prevent teachers from turning their attention so readily as I would like to see them turning to European and world history.

Closely related to this are the replies to the question which asked what purposes teachers of history seek to achieve for their pupils. Amongst

the replies given one of the most prominent is that the purpose is to foster international understanding. Yet it is widely felt that national history must still remain the basic content of the course and that European or world history would have to be seen through the eyes, as it were, of national history. Thus, in the replies made by the Walloon region of Belgium we find that in treating of other countries it is those which are either neighbours of Belgium or involved in her history that are treated with special care, and amongst these the reply mentions France, England and Germany and also, at an earlier date, the Habsburg Empire. This seems a perfectly natural and proper viewpoint but I am not quite so clear that it is really going to make for the widest measure of international understanding. In the reply from France, although the earlier civilisations—Greece, Rome and the Middle Ages—are naturally treated on a European or on a world basis, when we come to more modern history it is evident, especially from the dates that are mentioned, that France occupies the centre of the stage; thus the periods are divided at the years 1715, 1789, 1848, 1870, 1914, all of which leap to the eye as dates of immense significance in French history. On the other hand the last year of the French course appears to be devoted entirely to 20th century European and world history, which seems to me a most important development. The German reply states that national history is still to be found in the centre of the teaching, but that it is usually taught in a context of European history, which is really the same point as I have just made in respect of the French and Belgian replies. Again, in the case of Norway we find that emphasis is placed upon the study of national history, and in general this is the viewpoint running through the replies as a whole and it is certainly a viewpoint which reflects the current attitude towards history teaching in England.

Our civilisation being what it is, it is inevitable that we should still largely look at history through the eyes of our own country, but it would be a valuable exercise if at some stage in the history course—for example at the age of about 16, when the French course looks at European and world history in the 20th century—we should try with our pupils to look at problems specifically from a viewpoint other than our own and if possible directly opposed to our own. It is particularly valuable when a *conscious* effort is made in English schools to study the period of Louis XIV or of Napoleon wholly as periods of French civilisation and French endeavour and to forget altogether when doing so that in fact England was almost continuously at war both with Louis XIV and with Napoleon. In other words, we should look at other countries, sometimes at least, from their point of view and not outwards from London or Paris or Brussels or Vienna or our own capital city whatever it may be. If we do not do that we shall not be training our pupils in a true international understanding and I am bound to state my own personal conviction, after some 25 years studying the teaching of history in England, and to some extent in other countries, particularly in the United States of America, that it is very doubtful indeed whether most history teaching does in fact make for international understanding. It tends to make rather for international rivalry simply because international rivalry has in fact characterised most of history. Ever since for example the Normans conquered England in the year 1066 we have had a series of wars between England and France and it is asking a great deal of human

nature, and especially of the human nature of boys and girls of 15 or 16 years of age, that they should not begin to see the history of France and England in terms of a series of conflicts which become in their imagination rather like international sporting competitions, having the character of Rugby football internationals. Thus England won the contest in the 14th century, France won the contest in the 15th century, England won in the 7 Years' War, i.e. in the middle of the 18th century, France won in the war of American Independence—and so on. We confuse the field of Waterloo with the field of Colombes or of Twickenham. Can we really put our hands on our hearts and say that the ordinary teaching of history in the average (not the *best*) schools in our different countries does not tend still to increase and strengthen a narrow kind of national pride of English against French, of Italian against Austrian, of Dutch against Spaniard, of Turk against Greek? For my part I would not say that, as yet, the teaching of history tends towards international understanding, still less that the main purpose of history teaching is as yet to create that understanding.

The Patriotic Element

Despite the Common Market, EFTA, the Council of Europe, and the United Nations, this central fact of emotional nationalism remains a fundamental one and is still today a central factor in history teaching. From such study of history syllabuses as I have been able to make in a number of different countries, it appears that what we may loosely call the 'patriotic' element remains very large. When all has been said about the great themes that are European rather than national—the medieval Church, rise of towns, universities, the Reformation, the Renaissance, Humanism, the Enlightenment, and so on, it is still true that the really *emotive* history, *with the pupils we are now considering* is 'patriotic' history and is likely to remain so. There is a good reason for this. Many —perhaps most—countries, as Toynbee has observed, take their political consciousness, their sense of nationality, from a struggle in the past. It was that struggle that made them nations and it is absolutely natural and right that our children and our children's children should be told about it; one thinks of the Spanish struggle against the Moors, of the struggle of the Netherlands against Spain, of St. Joan of Arc against the brutal English, of George Washington, also against the brutal English, of the Irish against the same enemy, of the Germans against Napoleon, of the Italians against the Austrians, of the Greeks against the Turks, and so on. It was in the course of those struggles that Spain, Holland, France, the USA, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Greece, became nations, and to an important extent it is the memory of those struggles and sacrifices that makes those countries nations today—gives them their moral unity.

For what, in the last resort, *is* a nation, but a memory? It is not a distinct geographical boundary—look at Poland. It is not a common language—look at Belgium, Canada. It is not a common government—look at the Austro-Hungarian empire. It is a tradition, a memory. And that tradition, that memory, is perceived through history, and the kind of history that enshrines that memory is emotionally speaking the most powerful, and many would say the most useful. Can we expect national systems of education to ignore, in history, the roots of the nation? We shall not serve the progress of civilisation by emasculating that history, by pretending that the heroes of the past were not heroes after all. We

ought not, e.g., to ask our Italian friends to forget about Mazzini, Garibaldi, the *Cinque giorni di Milano*, or Vittorio Veneto. What we ought to do, in the interests of international understanding, is to give our boys and girls the other country's saga too. Give them plenty of practice in looking at European movements not merely through the eyes of their own country, but through the eyes of other countries. I take pride in the fact that, in England, St. Joan of Arc, and George Washington, who strove to throw the English out of France and America, and thus went far to create French and American national sentiment, are heroic figures, as well known to us in England as our own heroes.

Lastly, I come to the difficult problem of the relation of history to other subjects in the curriculum. The general effect of the replies is that history is not normally related to the work undertaken in other subjects except where it has been wholly merged with certain other subjects, for example with geography, to form social studies. We should consider whether the work in history ought not to be much more closely related to the work in a wider range of other subjects, and especially perhaps to the work in literature. In the replies from Paris and from Vienna there was a heartening emphasis on the need for this relationship. Sometimes the same teacher is responsible for the history and the literature just as in France the same teacher is responsible for the history and the geography and in that way an important correlation is achieved. How desirable it seems that the great flowering of French literature in the 17th century and the 18th century should be related to the study of the social history of France in those two fascinating periods!

But more important than the question of relating the work in history with the work in any other particular subject is the question of the real place and purpose of history within the curriculum as a whole. Is it there to provide the framework in time within which other subjects can be studied? Is it—as the English historian G. M. Trevelyan once said—the house within which the other subjects dwell? If so, its relation with the other subjects will naturally develop in a logical way. Those responsible for other subjects will doubtless say that we are claiming too much if we claim a central place in that sense for history in the curriculum as a whole. I am prejudiced enough to believe that in fact history does occupy—or should occupy—the central place amongst the humane studies of the curriculum; and that in many countries the curriculum is very seriously in need of being drawn together around a central core in the way that it used to be centred, in the old days, around the study of Latin and classical civilisation, and further that it is only around history that it can properly be centred. From us, as historians, what is needed is a reasoned statement of the values inherent in our subject, an explanation, clear and forthright, as to why, even in this utilitarian and sociological age, it is necessary, indeed fundamental to education, that children should gain a sense of the past, a sense of development, a sense of the relation of things which can only be acquired through history, and without which they will not be able to build that better world which we all want to see them, and their children, and their children's children, enjoy.

The Pathway Centre is an experimental further education centre which takes immigrants—mostly from India and Pakistan—and provides them with a one-year full-time course concentrating on English language teaching.

Pathway to English

MARTYN CLÉMANS

'Spoken English is the first need of the immigrant' says a standard work on the teaching of English as a foreign language.

'Jew wanna cab mate?'

No doubt Ranjit Singh or Hassan Mohammed on hearing this called out in a nasal London accent at the airport heartily agrees.

'At Pathway we teach English for survival, there's no two ways about it', says Evelyn Davies the senior lecturer in charge of the Pathway Centre in Ealing. 'These aren't the school children we're dealing with, they are young people soon to come up against the hard economic fact that with poor English you don't get much of a job. Many of the students coming to us are of high intelligence—only their lack of knowledge of our language is holding them back.'

Teachers at the centre do not speak languages other than English, with the exception of Satyakam Sethi, an Indian on the staff. Mr. Sethi's services are sometimes called upon in talks with parents however, and in interviewing students who have no English at all when they apply to join the centre. In the beginners' class he also holds occasional group discussions on subjects such as politics and the structure of British society, both of which are quite beyond the range of the students' English. With this exception, languages other than English are not used in class work.

The buildings of the centre are strictly functional and originally housed a war-time nursery school built in one corner of the Southall Recreation Ground. To this core have been added two wooden huts, one of which houses a 16-booth language laboratory, and two new prefabricated classrooms.

The pattern of immigration into the area, now under the jurisdiction of the Ealing Borough Council, has been for the West Indians to settle in Acton, Polish and Irish workers in Ealing and Indians (Sikhs) in Southall.

Of these groups the Indians with their poor English have the greatest problems and tend, for cultural and linguistic reasons, to form tightly knit groups. The Sikh community in Southall is relatively long established. Immigration began before the partition of India and by the 1950s workers were coming in fairly large numbers. The Woolf Rubber Company attracted most of them. A celebrated strike at Woolf's is to London's Sikh community what the great Dock Strike of 1889 was to organised labour.

The present student population of the centre is 80 per cent Sikhs and

the other twenty per cent made up of a mixture of Pakistanis and Gujurats, with a few Persians, Italians and Greeks.

The staff consists of six full-time lecturers (including Miss Davies) and two part-timers, all of whom are from the Ealing Technical College. There is also a full-time technician, essential in a situation where so much audio-visual equipment is in use.

A nursery nurse is on duty at the centre two days a week when English classes for adults are held. Mothers come with their youngest children and leave them in the crèche while they attend their class.

The students who come to the centre are at various stages in the development of their English. They are assessed linguistically and put in the class that suits them best. They can start at the beginning of any term provided there is a place available. The centre runs five day-time classes at present, each with not more than sixteen students, and three evening classes. As well as the reading and writing of English, instruction is given in basic mathematics.

One of the greatest needs is to expand the students' experience. Many of them, particularly the girls from the Moslem communities, lead very sheltered not to say confined lives. If their families want them to go to work at all it is into the factories where there are a lot of other Indian women workers, not into an office where they will meet English men. Conflict often occurs as a result of the vocational aspirations the centre gives young people. Girls start to want to abandon the colourful *shalwars* for mini-skirts and maxi coats, in order to conform to the norms of the group they aspire to join. Sikh boys show what lecturers at the centre call 'spring term syndrome'; towards the end of their time at the centre they get their hair cut and stop wearing the turban. Often both *shalwars* and turban reappear when the boy or girl feels able to cope effectively with the adult world of work.

Material used in teaching at the centre has all been developed by the staff. 'We looked at the available text books when we began here' Evelyn Davies said. 'Some are good—for primary schools. We cannot use them for this age group. The others are the old unsinkable books that have been around for years, full of sentences like "I am grateful for your invitation and I have enjoyed myself to the full".

The material Evelyn Davies and her colleagues have developed is closely related to the social background of the students. Punches are not pulled in it and there is no attempt to hide the facts of race prejudice.

The following extract is from one of the tapes *Sikhs in Southall* used at the centre:

> *On Ranjit's first day at work he had his lunch in the works canteen. His wife had made him some* chapatis *and he found a table with only one Englishman and started to sit down. The Englishman, who thought Ranjit couldn't speak English, began to make a lot of gestures pointing at the chair and waving Ranjit away. Listen to the dialogue—*
>
> (Canteen noises)
>
> *Man* No—No—You—No—sit—that—chair.
> *Ranjit* Excuse me. I do speak English you know.
> *Man* Oh sorry mate. Look I wouldn't sit there if I was you.
> *Ranjit* Why not?

Man It's old Bill's place. He must've sat there for 100 years. Nobody sits in his place.

Ranjit I'm sorry, I thought we could sit anywhere.

Man Well of course we *can*. Old Bill *could* sit anywhere but he prefers there because he's got used to it.

Ranjit I see. Is this place taken?

Man No, you're safe there mate. Make yourself at home.

Ranjit Thank you.

Man Goodness. What's that you're eating?

Ranjit It's chapati, a sort of pancake we eat in India.

Man Don't you like English food?

Ranjit Well yes, but I prefer this food because I'm used to it.

Man I don't blame you, the food here's awful. I'm just going to get a drink, can I get you anything?

Ranjit Oh yes. Thank you very much.

Man Which do you prefer. Coffee or tea?

Ranjit I prefer tea, please.

Man O.K. Won't be long. And watch out, old Bill's coming. Don't mind him, he doesn't mean half he says, but he'll have plenty to say about that turban of yours *and* that chi-putti thing.

Ranjit Thanks for the warning.

Man 'ello 'ello 'ello what have we here? It's gone dark in the canteen these days.

(Fade)

The material used also seeks to develop a close relationship with the world of work in the form of letters of application for jobs, the completion of application forms, and descriptions of behaviour at interviews. Language tapes back up all the written material. The whole course at the centre is closely vocationally orientated; account is taken of the aims and aspirations that can motivate each individual student in his desire to learn. The vocabulary and structures taught reflect the language of the social environment, including the workshop and factory. The Schools Council is interested in the Pathway material and some of it is to be re-shaped to form part four of *Scope*, the Council's English for immigrants teaching material.

'The first stages of a language course are usually the most difficult to devise', Evelyn Davies said. 'Once your students have some familiarity with our social background you can broaden their vocabulary, but it takes time. Many of the sounds we make that are so natural to our language are right outside the immigrant's range. The English W for instance, as in William is very hard for an Indian to say; *bed* comes out *bid*—there are no end of other examples.' And the whole of our sentence pattern is unfamiliar to Indians who have never learned English.

This means it takes a relatively long time to put across the structure of the language. The student must hear the pattern repeated many times if he is to be able to repeat it.

Learning to write English is more difficult for the student at Pathway than for some of their younger brothers and sisters in primary schools. They will often already have learned to write the *gurmukhi* script (a minority will write *urdu*) and they face problems of adapting to English which has different spatial relationships. The centre teaches an English script similar to printed forms from the beginning, and then joins it into a cursive hand. No attempt is made to teach italic handwriting, there

being enough other problems to cope with. Because of the difficulty immigrants have in knowing where the pen should be placed to begin writing, a special three-lined paper is used to teach writing.

The most recent development at the centre will mean its greater involvement with local industry. A new member of the staff has been taken on to work with employers in devising courses to be given by factory training officers. He will have an assistant who will work alongside immigrant employees in order to find out more clearly what their language needs. Course material will then be prepared that is meaningful, sums up the work environment, and develops the right language needs. This seems to be an eminently sensible approach; too much teaching material reflects the middle-class values and aspirations. It is important for an immigrant working in a factory (where he meets English expressions like 'Be off' and 'Pars thee efin broom') to be given teaching that takes account of his needs. The DEP, the industrial training boards—which have permitted language to qualify for training grant—and the training officers of large employers of immigrants in the area are all co-operating in this work.

One hopes that this work will lead to the Pathway Centre and what it can offer becoming more widely known to immigrant families in the Ealing area. The afternoon classes for adults particularly need publicising, for numbers attending are extremely small. The centre appears to fill an important gap in our educational provision for immigrants. This gap is only partially filled in other ways for this group. The ways language difficulties of immigrants are dealt with varies widely from one area to another—the DES is shortly to publish a survey of educational provision for immigrants, and the NFER is embarking on a close-up study of the problem of the education of immigrants, with the aid of a DES grant. But it is usually out of reach of our educational institutions, for its members cannot qualify for further education without a good command of language. This means getting a dead-end job, perpetually *parsin thee efin broom*, for young people whose potential may be somewhat higher than that. Just how much higher and for how many we may never know.

Immigrant children are often subjected to two disparate cultures and languages. What can be done to minimise the conflict that may arise for them in this situation?

Immigrants — their Languages and Development

E. GLYN LEWIS

The argument which is pursued in the following remarks is based on four propositions—that immigrant children are likely to be bilingual for several years to come; that while bilingualism itself is no disadvantage a situational conflict affecting the languages is liable to result in considerable disadvantage; this disadvantage is to their emotional development which in turn affects other aspects of their behaviour; and finally, since the danger lies in the situation in which the languages may be used a great deal may be done to minimise the possibility of conflict. Some of the evidence to establish these propositions is derived from the work of A. R. Luria, the Soviet psychologist.

Linguistic and Cultural Differences

Experience in the United States and Canada suggests that the educational issues arising from the presence of immigrants are likely to persist over several generations.[1] Very few immigrants remain embedded in their native cultures exclusively; the vast majority become culturally heterogenous and bilingual. Nevertheless they retain some important vestiges of those native culture traits; certainly the most important in the short term is language. While the immigrants constitute an easily identifiable group, distinguishable from the main population, they are, needless to say, far from being a uniform group. Immigrant nationalities differ from each other as much as they differ from the British. They are at various distances from English culture and language, and, in varying degrees they present relatively closed communities, not only with different languages but with different systems of community organisation, concept of authority within the group and very often with something approaching their own institutions so far as family and religious life are concerned.

It has been argued that these differences are fundamentally either genetic[2] or socio-economic[3]. In the future, when as in the US the immigrants have had an opportunity to share, broadly speaking, the same social and cultural values as the native population, genetic differences, if they do exist, may be the most important ways in which they differentiate themselves. This is not so at present in Britain, where cultural differences are so powerful in their impact on educational development as to make it necessary for the schools to have a special regard for them. Immigrants bring with them a storehouse of very

[1] Fisherman, J. A., *Language Loyalty in the U.S.*, Mouton, The Hague, 1966.
[2] Jensen, A. R., 'Learning Abilities in Mexican American and Anglo American Children', *Calif. J. of Ed. Research*, Vol. 12 1961.
[3] Bernstein, B., 'Social Class, Linguistic Codes and Grammatical Elements', *Language and Speech*, Vol. 5, 1962.

valuable but also extremely different traditions and these differences help to determine the immigrants' interpretation of the environment and reaction to it; so that they manifest different responses to social situations. The inclusion of a child in a particular social or cultural setting, the acquisition of a particular language and the whole set of traditions thus inherited, presents profound psychological problems.

A culture is the sum total of the society's ways of classifying and systematizing experience, and different cultures have different ways of classifying and organising their perceptions of the world, and consequently the system of meanings encapsulated in language. For instance such a simple and ordinary concept as 'a pet' was either not understood or, if understood reacted to adversely by immigrant children studied in a Toronto classroom. Studies undertaken by Stafford[4] suggest that problem solving is influenced by the ways in which a bilingual's languages have been acquired and are now used. And evidence for different cognitive styles resulting from the same considerations have been set out by Bruner.[5]

Language and Emotional Development

There are few teachers who are not agreed that the schools of this country will need, for a long time to come, to provide for children who are in contact with two cultures and two languages, and who are consequently characterised by different patterns of cognitive and emotional development. While some work has been done on the cognitive aspects of the problem hardly anything at all has been attempted in Britain to study the emotional problems that may arise. Yet a person's emotional state helps to influence his effective membership of any society. Unless an individual's emotions are maintained with tolerable consistency the organisation of society is liable to be disrupted. Moreover emotional instability inhibits the development of intellectual and scholastic competence since intelligence cannot be equated with intellectual ability alone but must be regarded as a manifestation of the whole personality.

What then are the emotional correlates of such bilingual bicultural situations? The reports on bilingualism in education published by HMSO[6] provide summaries of the general evidence, but probably the most conclusive and scholarly study was conducted by Spoerl who concluded that 'the emotional maladjustment of bilingual students is the result of the culture conflict and not so much of the mental conflict engendered by complexities of thinking and speaking in two languages'. In discussing the emotional correlates of bilingualism we are concerned with the *setting*, the circumstances in which it occurs, especially the attitudes towards it adopted by the bilinguals and the non-bilingual members of the same society. Awareness of differences is inevitable and natural: it is one of the ways in which an individual comes to create a concept of self, of personal identity. Such an awareness is more intense among bilinguals and especially bilingual immigrants. It pro-

---

[4] Stafford, K. R., *Problem Solving as a function of Language*, Final Report of C.R.P. No. 2944, 1966.

[5] Bruner, J. S., *et al*, *Studies in Cognitive Growth* (London 1964).

[6] *The Place of Welsh and English in the Schools of Wales* (Edited Lewis, E. G., 1953) and *Bilingualism in Education* (Ed. Lewis, E. G. for UNESCO, UK Commission, 1965).

duces among them one of four results; the immigrant is highly conscious of his ethnic origins and conceives himself as distinctly differentiated from the others, so that he is likely to develop hostility towards those others Nevertheless he maintains a consistent attitude and is not the victim of emotional insecurity and uncertainty. A second alternative is uncertainty in his ethnic identification patterns, life on the margins of his own and the dominant cultures. Thirdly, the immigrant may go out of his way not to be identified with his own group and in fact seek to avoid commitment to any community—he tries to be completely non-allied. Finally, the immigrant may succeed in preserving a stable relationship with both cultures and languages, having made clear to himself the domains in which his commitment to either culture is relevant. He may succeed in other words in preserving delimited areas in which one or other but not both may function. The two cultures and the two languages are equally meaningful but in different ways and different areas of his life.

It is the second and third categories of immigrants, the marginal and the non-allied, who are most at risk, inconsistent and vacillating in their attitudes towards their two languages. While it may be true that it would be extremely difficult to identify children of school age who could be categorised in this way, it is certain that their parents belong to one or other of the four groups and the consequences for the children are therefore no less real.

In different ways and with different intensities the marginal and unattached person is alienated from both possible cultural milieux and a state of alienation necessarily involves a total crisis of personal identity and emotional life. It is produced by inconsistencies between the individual's past or his traditional upbringing and the demands of his present new environment. In so far as the two languages he has acquired are concerned, uncertainty in the choice of language will depend on several factors: for example whether the occasion on which he is called to make a choice is a public or a private one; whether the occasion involves problems of group ethnic identification; whether the prestige of the two languages, public attitude towards them or degree of intolerance of either is manifest; whether the occasion is a novel, threatening one, an occasion when the immigrant is concerned with being adequate and making a good impression, especially if his level of aspiration is high, leading to a concern for correct usage; whether the occasion and the choice of language touches central rather than peripheral layers of personality. Another extremely important factor within the speech situation is what may be called 'task orientation'—whether the language of choice is appropriate to the kind of work on which the immigrant is engaged. It cannot be too often repeated that though these factors may not operate very strongly or immediately on the child they are no less important in determining his attitude to his two languages. For instance, Bossard and Boll[7] tell of cases in which children avoided meeting their parents in public because they were unable to speak the language of their new home. Such pathological emotional states create intense anxieties and these in turn have been known to result in illnesses which characterise such groups exclusively. So far as the two languages in use by the immigrant are concerned, then, two conditions need to be fulfilled: first there must be a clear

[7] Bossard and Boll, *Sociology of Child Development* (New York 1960).

concept of the different roles the two languages have to play and a consistent attitude towards them and towards their cultural settings. The immigrant child in process of acquiring or maintaining the two languages needs to have a consistent relationship to them so that he knows which is relevant on what occasions. The second condition is a favourable general environment for the use of the two languages, so that a child is not discouraged from using either language when he feels it is relevant. If either language is regarded unfavourably on the hearth or at school the child is unlikely to act consistently no matter how well he may recognise the relevance of language to situation.

Psychological roles of Language

So far the argument has assumed that language is important, something we all recognise in a general fashion. However, it is necessary to indicate the specific ways in which language exercises its importance, since it is in specific areas of use or of function that possible conflict of languages occurs. First, language is important to a child as the most useful means of communication with others. Second, it is important as the embodiment of the culture to which the language is attached. If a child is to belong emotionally to any society and its culture he must be able to use the language. A great deal if not most of value learning comes from the understanding of language. Children learn the attitudes of society not simply by actual reward or punishment but by verbal communication—criticism and praise. They do not need to commit misdemeanours in order to know right from wrong. They are guided to acceptable social behaviour because in the main they have heard such behaviour approved or disapproved.

Languages are so closely related to systems of evaluation in a culture that a shift in language may be associated with a shift in attitude and in emotional orientation. Since each language is learned and used with different groups and generally speaking in different social contexts the shift from one language to another may be accompanied by a shift in a large assemblage of behavioural traits. That being the case, and the bilingual child being by definition under the obligation to make these changes periodically, the 'rationale' of the employment of his two languages has to be explicit, so that the behaviour within any situation involving choice of language may be consistent and predictable.

Third, a particular language functions in a fundamental way in determining how we perceive things and events around us. Speech disturbances in aphasic children may cause significant distortion in visual perception. It has been suggested that because languages differ in structure and vocabulary the speakers of different languages perceive the world differently. While the firm evidence for this is sparse and inconclusive it is nevertheless sufficient to suggest that language has a part to play in determining how children from different linguistic communities react differently to the same stimuli. Language classifies experience and systems of classification among bilinguals may be in conflict.

Fourth, 'psychologically speech plays a role in human behaviour of no less importance than in communication. It is the means of regularising and organising the actual world . . . and on the other hand it is the agent of organising behaviour of planning further actions'.[8] It is this

[8] Luria, A. R., *The Nature of Human Conflicts* (1932, quoted in 1967 edition N.Y.).

internal functioning of language rather than its communicative functions that are related to the most important possible dangers to which an adversely situated bilingual may be exposed. Luria suggests that the acquisition of speech and the transition to a new cultural form of living 'changes the structure of the psychophysiological processes'. Until a child is able to use words to delay or inhibit a response or to interrupt an action which he has already prepared for or embarked upon, until he is able to move from the impulsive initiatory functions of speech to the analytical and inhibitory he is not able to undertake an act of choice. The active system of speech is the 'definite leading system' psychologically, and 'introducing the possibility of conflict here produces destruction in that process upon which depends the whole structure of the act'.

The inhibitory regulating functions of language are exercised most successfully in states of emotional equilibrium; they are much more perfect in a state of composure than during affect. This regulatory function may be artificially destroyed by introducing certain conflicts into the situation. Luria is emphatic in maintaining that there is no necessary or inevitable conflict between the languages of the bilingual person, nor is there any *necessary* disadvantage to offset the many advantages of learning a foreign language. 'These disturbances are referred not to the difficulty of associating (ideas) in a foreign language but exclusively to the necessity of transferring from one established setting to another'. Speaking in a certain language the person creates a definite psychological setting, and 'transfer to a new setting, with a removal of the former setting, is evidently sufficient to cause neurodynamic disturbances'. In another place he states 'it should be sufficient to bring into collision such language settings in order to evoke a conflict of two very complicated structural systems . . . with results in the neurodynamics of the subject'. Luria's experiments have shown that when the transfer from one language to another was sudden and unregulated there was considerable conflict which introduced 'a series of very interesting and serious disturbances . . . Sudden transfer to another language is combined with a very great destructive process'.

Conflict between Language Settings

This being the case what is the nature of the destructive processes caused by unregulated transfer? Ervin claims that her more recent studies of bilinguals reveal the possession of two personalities and she concludes—'This result is no more surprising than any other shift in behaviour with social context. It happens that bilinguals have available an additional dimension of potential variation in behaviour in comparison with alternative roles available to monolinguals.' What Luria in his experimental work has done is to give some evidence to substantiate previous speculation, and even more important, to qualify those speculations by showing that the danger arises not out of the contact of the two languages but from the handling of the setting of the two languages.

That there is a danger Luria has shown and it is characterised by him in some contexts as a 'reversion to more primitive mechanisms of thinking' called syncretism following the custom of Piaget and Clapared: all his experiments, he claims, confirm the danger of this reversion from more advanced to more infantile systems of reacting, in which very 'capricious forms of response occur'. The reversion is conse-

quent on the lowering of the 'functional barrier', a psychological process of cultural origin, and the nature of which is determined to a large extent by the acquisition of language and by the characteristics of that language. It enables the child to exercise an inhibitory, restraining influence—to interpose a barrier between excitation and response. It ensures, therefore, that the child is guarded against unpremeditated and immediate response. The functional barrier is the basis of voluntary as opposed to unreflective reaction. The result of an emotional disturbance consequent on language conflict is to 'weaken the inhibitory and restraining functions of the higher strata of the nervous apparatus. The higher regulating mechanisms suffer from the affect . . . resulting in a distortion and disorganising of behaviour'. In the structure of a child's response there is a regulating factor in which speech is an important element and any slight disturbance in the regulating system inevitably brings about a considerable distortion.

One form of the distortion is spasmodic speech behaviour and hesitancy. Words function as meaningful units only in context, and it is in context that they form an elaborate network of associations. This network is thought to work more or less automatically and unconsciously as a broad source of transfer for conceptual learning and retention. Any impairment or even a slight disturbance of this associative network is bound to have adverse consequences at all levels. This is what happens when there is conflict between a child's choice of language, since such a conflict rouses emotional reactions and 'the associative process in the affective state is entirely another structure than that which is observed in the associative network of ordinary subjects'. Luria points out that during conflict of language associations the time expended in speech responses fluctuated and together with rapidly flowing associations he had very slow ones. The subjects whom he observed were not able as a rule to produce reactions with any degree of stability.

This phenomenon he relates to sudden transfer of language—'the subject when exposed suddenly to an unfamiliar word or one with which he is slightly familiar in one language attempts to think it out assimilating it to words whose meaning is known to him in another language'. Thus given the word 'letter' in English a speaker of Russian responds with an English association 'summer' because of assimilation with the Russian word 'leto' meaning summer. These confusions occur at the level of understanding words as well as in actually speaking a language. The phenomenon is of course well known to teachers who have observed bilinguals and learners of foreign languages. What is important in Luria's work is that he shows these confusions result in disturbed emotional states—'we may confidently expect fairly marked neurodynamic change to accompany these conflicting processes. As much as 82 per cent of all accompanying motor reactions accompanying these breakdowns in verbal associations correlate with considerable disturbances.'

It cannot be repeated too often that the psychological disturbances to which we have referred result not from the possession of two or more languages but as a result of conflict arising from sudden transfer from one language to another, from conflict within the context of their employment. It is conflict in the relationship of the two languages that accounts for disturbances. This relationship is determined partly by the way in which the two languages are acquired: whether for instance

they are learned in 'co-ordinate situations where the languages are learned at different stages of life, or having been acquired are kept separate by being used with well recognised different groups. For instance in school one language may be used only with a particular teacher and the other language with another, or with either parent exclusively. On the other hand they may be acquired in 'compound situations' where both languages are acquired simultaneously in mixed language communities or are used indiscriminately without relating one language exclusively to one group or another'.[9] The setting is influenced also by the attitude of others to the two languages so that a child either accepts the two languages as functionally equivalent and appropriate, or is forced to hesitate in his choice. It is not the possession of the two languages which is the cause of disturbances but uncertainty concerning their relationship. This uncertain or unorganised relationship results in capricious, unsystematic and fitful switching from one to the other. These considerations are well within the capacity of the teacher to cope with provided he is first of all able to operate within a sound general policy for the treatment of immigrants, one which discourages negative attitudes towards their languages; and secondly provided he is knowledgeable about the linguistic, psychological and sociological aspects of the contact of languages in children. The problem of ensuring a satisfactory setting for each language and for a right relationship between the two settings is a pedagogical problem which can be solved by a judicious attention to the circumstances of the child's need to use either language.

Pedagogic Implications

A sound linguistic education for immigrant children depends therefore upon a sound general policy in respect of the immigrant in society. It has to be recognised that the structure of the culture and society of our country, flexible though it is imposes severe limitations on the degree to which the new elements represented by the immigrants can be absorbed without undue strain and adverse consequences to the linguistic upbringing of the immigrant himself. This cultural and linguistic absorption can take one of several forms. The least difficult mode of integration is 'operative interdependence' where recognition is given to the contribution of the immigrants to the day to day conduct of the social system. The most difficult is 'value integration', where different systems of belief, and of attitudes are brought together to merge or fuse or coalesce in a new or at least greatly modified culture, as the Spanish and Indians merged to produce the Mexican society and culture. A third form of relationship, one more likely to prevail during the foreseeable future in Britain is 'cultural pluralism'. The dual heritage of the immigrant child and their psychological need to operate on two levels and within two cultures with related languages have to be recognised. Otherwise the ensuring state of relative disarray in the social/cultural structures within which the immigrant child operates produces a breakdown in the linguistic competence of the child and not only a breakdown of his control of the languages themselves but of the stable relationship between them.

---

[9] Imedadze, N., 'On the psychological nature of child speech formula under condition of exposure to two Languages', *Int. J. of Psych.*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1967.

Consequently one area of the education of immigrants which needs to be considered possibly in a very different way from that in which it relates to the native British child is the role of nursery or kindergarten education. The intensity of the danger arising from language conflict is greatest in the early years of childhood. One aspect of the avoidance of such conflict is the establishment of the mother tongue very firmly in its appropriate setting at an early age. In a monolingual society this does not create excessive conflict between home and school though social dialect problems do occasionally cause difficulty. Furthermore in a traditional bilingual country such as Quebec, Ireland, S. Africa or Wales the schools can be relied on to help establish the mother tongue from the beginning whichever language may be involved. So far as most of the non-English speaking immigrants in Britain are concerned it would be unrealistic to expect the school to be able to do much if anything to help support the establishment of the mother tongue—it has to be exclusively the function of the home. I suggest that there are two sets of dual considerations to keep in mind. In favour of early nursery school education of immigrant children is first of all the fact that in most cases 3–5 year olds tend to be immune to the contagious disease of social prejudice which prevents acceptance and integration. At this age such integration is the result of a natural process of growing up together, something which may later require re-education. Second, is the fact that entrance to school requires adjustment on the part of any child, and this adjustment is particularly important linguistically. If the gap among children of different linguistic communities is small the teaching process gradual and the period for habit formation prolonged the immigrant can learn through imitation and informal contact as well as formally.

However there are other considerations leading to the possible conclusion that immigrant young children may find it more advantageous to remain at home for a longer period than the native born English speaking child. First, pre-school, when the child moves from the shelter of the family system to identification with a new and encompassing social system can easily be a period of crisis. For the immigrant child the shelter afforded by home is of greater significance than it is to the native child since the movement outward in the former case is synonymous with a change of cultural associations and the predominance of another language. This does not occur in the case of the English child for whom home and school, even where disadvantaged children are concerned are continuous extensions of the same dimension. Second, in an immigrant heterogenous society there are limited opportunities for learning the appropriate norms through imitation and the acquisition of these norms has to be 'screened'—the young child can be weaned only gradually to the acceptance of them.

By skilful use of its environment a Merseyside school has given its pupils rich new experiences and developed various aspects of the curriculum including workshop crafts, technical drawing and survey work.

The Sea as a Centre of Interest

B. W. LUCKE

Many secondary schools are seeking to involve pupils in active situations, and to encourage enquiry and investigation. The importance of the sea in the life of a great port suggested to a school in Liverpool that boats and the water might become such a centre of interest for boys in their third and fourth years and this endeavour has proved to be a striking success.

Marked features of the course are the wide variety of the subject matter, the skill with which exercises have been devised at different levels of sophistication to suit boys of varying ability, the interest aroused by the practical nature of the work.

Improvising Equipment

The first steps were tentative and cautious, so that only a few boys were introduced to simple chart work in the classroom as an extension of geography and mathematics. Tools and materials were very limited; school compasses did duty for the navigator's dividers; a sextant was brought out from the master's attic; steering compasses and dumb-cards were contrived from such unlikely materials as shaving soap bowls and darning needles, while the apparent motion of the sun was studied by setting up a shadow-stick in the classroom window.

Before long, money was found to convert a small obsolete gymnasium into two large intercommunicating rooms, one of which was fitted with work benches, storage space and power points to make it suitable for full scale boat building, rigging and general seamanship; the other was furnished with large tables, plan presses, shelving and cupboards to provide for the more theoretical sides of seamanship, navigation, astronomy and surveying. In the workshop a variety of craft has been built, ranging from canoes *Heron* and *GP14* dinghies to the dory now on the stocks.

Some equipment was available from the beginning but more has been improvised; cheap sources of supply have been located for such items as sailing directions, charts and almanacs which, though superseded as out-of-date, are still admirably suited for learning their use; from time to time modern instruments have been acquired, sometimes at reduced prices, through the kindness of ships' chandlers and instrument makers. But there is obvious value in involving the boys themselves in the design and construction of learning aids and much equipment has therefore been made in the school.

Navigation

Sailing at this school has not been limited to the pleasure of acquiring

skills in fine weather. Boys wearing oilskins and life jackets afloat in controlled conditions and in quite rough weather are no unusual sight; in these circumstances, the reason for rigidly enforced safety rules becomes apparent.

Hydrographic surveys have been carried out afloat and have included running and plotting lines of soundings with a hand-lead and line and latterly an echo sounder has been acquired to speed the work; a core-sampler has been contrived from scrap metal to extract bottom material; a cross sectional model of the main Mersey channel has been made and sections of chart have been drawn from data obtained by the boys themselves.

One cannot both make and use a compass for steering courses and taking bearings, to say nothing of computing its errors, without learning something about magnetism. Many simple techniques have been devised to gain knowledge and understanding while ashore to amplify experience afloat; courses are 'steered' by hooded boys, compass in hand, pacing their way across the school field; 'dead-reckoning' positions are arrived at and are compared with 'fixes' obtained by cross bearings of surrounding buildings; 'set and drift' (due to uneven footsteps) are measured. Magnetism has been induced by hammering an iron rod to simulate a ship's inherent magnetism after the percussion of the building yard. A simple model ship with a bar magnet underneath and a compass on top simulates the deviation which results from this effect, so that boys may make observations and construct tables and curves of error in the comfort of the classroom before having to correct a compass in a small boat; even this step is eased by carrying out the same task with a boat on its trailer ashore before tackling the much more difficult conditions afloat. Magnetic variation has been found by comparison with a true meridian marked from equal solar altitudes and plotted on a concrete forecourt and the results have been checked against published data.

Terrestrial navigation develops from these simple exercises ashore to similar projects afloat, using charted buoys and beacons, and is expanded by more complex imaginary voyages in the classroom. An understanding of marine charts is thus gained by experience and is further deepened by some study of projection; an illuminated skeleton globe is used to cast the shadow of its graticule on cones, cylinders and planes of transparent paper so that boys may grasp the powers and limitations of the conic, gnomonic and cylindrical projections and may approach the use of the latitude scale as a measure of distance with real understanding and may later project these graticules on the drawing board.

Buoyage and the rule of the road at sea are learned, in part afloat, but in greater detail through the use of models; small and beautifully glazed buoys and lighthouses have been made by boys in pottery lessons, model ships and sailing craft to scale have been made from a variety of materials and a table top with cardboard shoals and sand banks provides a fine arena. Indeed the boys were recently encouraged to devise a sailing game on squared paper with wind, tide and the players' moves governed by throw of dice and the general situation controlled by 'chance-cards' indicating such disasters as 'A southerly squall has dismasted all boats to windward of Mud Point buoy'. Some modification of the International Yacht Racing Rules was required,

and it is now probable that only the boys themselves fully understand this complicated and rather cut-throat pastime!

Flag signalling, morse and semaphore codes are not forgotten though few boys reach any real competence in passing messages; nevertheless flags are known by sight and the morse key serves another purpose in teaching the recognition of lights whose characteristics can be compared both with the charted symbols and the Admiralty light-lists.

Measures and Models

Sailing in the estuary of the Dee cannot but bring home the importance of tides and these also provide grist to the classroom mill. Not only has the height of tides been accurately measured, but boys have made models and diagrams to illustrate the daily rise and fall, springs and neaps, the influence of sun and moon and the relationship between these phenomena and the charted information. Some of these models have been as simple as a sliding sheet of transparent plastic in front of a cross section of the River Mersey; others have virtually become predicting machines for the future; an old aquarium has been fitted with syphons to reproduce in three dimensions what the diagrams show in two. From all this work has grown the ability to use tide tables to predict the height of tide at any given time, to understand with precision the meaning of such phrases as 'Mean low water springs' and to reduce actual soundings to chart datum. A start has been made at observing the flow of tidal streams (though this is a tedious business) but at least sufficient grasp of the subject has been obtained to lead to the efficient use of the set in the area where school boats sail and to use tidal atlases to forecast currents elsewhere.

The measurement of speed has been done both by observing changes in position and by making and streaming the historic hand-log and sandglass and by using the 'Dutchman's log', both of which provide excellent examples of the practical use of ratio and proportion. Fixing position afloat has been an approach to much good mathematical teaching; cross bearings, transits, bearing and distance off, running fixes and doubling the angle on the bow as well as horizontal and vertical sextant angles have all provided interesting and practical applications of simple trigonometry, geometrical theorems, vectors and time-distance problems. Experience of set and drift together with the relationship between courses steered and those 'made good' have introduced the triangle of velocities to many boys who might otherwise have fought shy of such a concept. As with other work, much of this is first tried out on the school field and is continued at a later stage with classroom exercises on Admiralty charts. It does not however always end there; on a recent journey by sea from Weymouth to the Channel Islands, boys got their data from the ship in advance, prepared a voyage plan and had the great satisfaction of checking their results en route and making their estimated landfall under the Captain's eye. To anyone who can use nautical data, as the most able of these boys do, preparation for the annual visit to the Norfolk Broads is child's play and is, indeed, regarded by them as more of a holiday than serious work.

The work in astronomical navigation has, so far, been largely limited to understanding how position can be computed from solar observations. The most important tool for this purpose has been an old globe, remounted and set up in the open, correctly orientated so that it reflects

exactly upon its surface the sunshine and shadow falling on the Earth itself. Small paper sundials set around the globe tell apparent time at different places for comparison with their longitude; tropic and arctic circles are marked out during a single day's observation and the sun's course across the globe is plotted. The art of dialling has also arisen from this elegant demonstration and boys have made a variety of sundials, equatorial, cylindrical, vertical and horizontal, often of card or scrap materials but sometimes beautifully engraved on copper and brass. The geometry involved is not only testing in itself but is an interesting and unusual application of principles derived from technical drawing.

Work with stars and planets is, by its nature, limited in a day school and still more so in a great city where flaring street lights compete with the more delicate tracery of the heavens. Nevertheless some very interesting work has been done with a home-made orrery to illustrate the motions of the planets and more work is planned to convert the whole classroom into a 'celestial sphere'.

Seamanship

Of practical seamanship there is plenty. Rigging boats, making log and lead lines, moorings, canvas bags, sea anchors and boatcovers are practical needs which demand the acquisition of skills to supply. The boys' skills with knots and splices, with stoppering, belaying and coiling rope and wire, find ready application and lead both to efficient work and to a pride in craftsmanship. Ships' construction has been an incidental part of visits to the docks and the shipping in them as well as a study of models. Even stability has found a place with a model hull section, floating in an old tank, which can be ballasted to make it stiff or tender, heeled to find the metacentric height, or partially filled with water to show the dangers inherent in such a state. This work has been repeated in dinghies and, using a boy to illustrate the effects of off centre loading, the hazards have been convincingly demonstrated as the dinghy capsized and precipitated its load into the water.

The school's small fleet provides as valuable a discipline in its maintenance as it has done in its construction and not only have boys been involved in the assembly of craft, but also in the manufacture of the small gear as well: shackle-keys, goose-necks, pintles and gudgeons, boat hooks, anchors and launching trolleys have all been made and machined in the school workshops as has much of the learning equipment. Repairs and overhaul each season tax skill and ingenuity at the same time as they warn to greater care in future.

While meteorology is not studied in any great depth, daily records are kept and, on sailing days, synoptic charts and the weather forecast are studied with more than usual attention. At West Kirby, the view across the Dee to the Welsh mountains and out across the Irish Sea is not only a magnificent prospect for street-bound city children, but is also an excellent observation point for frontal systems, cloud types, land and sea breezes and their effects upon the water. These are by no means purely academic exercises, since boys have to shorten sail before a summer squall if they are to avoid a ducking; the discipline of the sea is as impartial as it is relentless and impersonal.

The Influences Exerted

To date, the school has set its face against assessing progress by external

examination in this field because of the risk of destroying the spontaneity of the work. Recently, however, the liberal attitude of the North Western Examining Board towards inter-disciplinary studies has led the masters concerned to reconsider and a plan is now being prepared by which boys will maintain records of all they do in a way which may make it possible to mark course work and credit it towards appropriate subjects (such as mathematics) in the certificate of secondary education under mode III.

It will be plain that the inter-relations between this part of the curriculum and other aspects of school life are pervasive and important. Without the energetic support of the technical department, much that has been accomplished could not have been attempted; in less obvious ways, foundations laid in science, mathematics, geography and even history, have been built upon in navigation and seamanship. Among older boys the work has had a profound, though subtle influence upon all that is done elsewhere; mathematics and science draw directly from it; art and the crafts not only exploit the boys' experiences but often find a demand for their skills in the making of equipment or learning materials; history and geography are able to use the boys' interest to further their own ends; much of the boatwork may fairly be described as physical education in the best sense and even the command of spoken and written English is the greater since, in a language such as our own, salted as it is with maritime metaphor, an understanding of the origins of idiom leads to a more accurate and imaginative usage. Intellectual stimulus is not, however, all that this course provides; another and equally important aspect is its influence upon character. It has had a marked effect upon boys in developing initiative, a sense of responsibility and in encouraging a respect for other people's property as well as their own; the tradition of mutual aid among all who use the water has become a part of their attitude to life.

This article is based on an address given by the author to the National Association for Art Education in April.

Coherent Secondary Education

G. S. V. PETTER

There is a constant and natural pressure on secondary schools from the fact that the health of our economy depends on the emergence at the adult stage of young men and women with administrative or technological expertise, and of recruits to many branches of industry and commerce capable of developing a variety of technical and manual skills. A more direct type of pressure is exerted by the system of public examinations. This may result in the demands of the subject being studied often appearing to be more important than the overall need of the pupils who are studying. Such a downward pressure makes it difficult for heads and their staffs to think out a programme of their own choosing designed to meet the needs of their pupils.

At the same time the secondary school is subject to a very strong upward pressure, clearly indicated in the Plowden report. In the chapter called 'Children, Their Growth and Development', the significance of a child's developmental age is stressed, that is, the stage that he has attained intellectually, emotionally and physically. Individual differences between children and the maxim that 'unless a child is ready to take a particular step forward it is a waste of time to try to teach him to take it'; the insistence that IQ scores, though a rough indication of potential and ability, should not be treated as infallible predictors; hence that judgment which determines careers should be delayed as long as possible—all this suggests a steady, unhurried process, each boy and girl being encouraged to enquire and explore and proceed at his own rate though fully stretched. Such ideas, which the best primary schools are putting into practice, are gaining ground in many secondary schools.

These two pressures, one from above and the other from below, are to some extent reflected in two points of view, sometimes, though not always, diametrically opposed, but vigorously discussed by heads, in staff rooms, and among educationists in general. For convenience, let us polarise these arguments and state each in brief.

Reconciling Two Viewpoints

The progressives, supported by successful primary practitioners and by a number of psychologists and sociologists, argue as follows. It has been assumed for too long that the established secondary school curriculum, originally devised to cater for grammar school pupils, provides an adequate framework for a programme which must cater for the whole range of ability in secondary schools. Traditional academic studies are totally irrelevant for the majority of the secondary school population. Such studies represent an enforced diet thought misguidedly to be digestible if not palatable by growing boys and girls. In fact, only those subjects that are useful have any real appeal

or claim the pupils' whole-hearted attention and respect. The whole programme should be re-thought and re-planned in the light of the psychological and sociological factors which are known to have bearing on the pupils' capacity to benefit from the learning process. New approaches, new methods, tailor-made to suit every individual or group, must be undertaken in order that what boys and girls do in the school has direct relevance to their experience and to the environment in which they live. The enquiry approach so successfully used with young children can safely and profitably be continued, enquiries running over the boundaries of established subjects thus involving the pupil in a process of integrating areas of study commonly pursued in isolation. It is not good enough that the entire educational process should be distorted to enable those with the capacity to achieve academic competence or distinction to meet their particular requirements. Able pupils are well enough endowed already to reach their goal without making others suffer on their behalf.

The contrary argument runs as follows. The subject-based curriculum has a long and honourable history. With wise teaching the study of a subject is not merely an end in itself but a medium for stimulating intellectual, imaginative and creative processes. Where the study of a subject is ineffectual, methods and approaches need re-thinking but not necessarily the content itself. What is significant is not the lack of interest shown by the pupil but the teacher's lack of faith in what he is doing. If the enquiry method means learning to work on one's own, to use books and develop intellectual self-confidence, then it is already a well-tried and well-proven method in secondary schools. But if it means a programme of spasmodic investigation, unproductive of any substantial or co-ordinated knowledge and experience, the method is altogether too haphazard and lacking in vigour to provide any lasting satisfaction either to pupils or to teachers. Furthermore, at the secondary stage, content matters. The multiplicity of knowledge provides no argument for abandoning attempts at systematic study. What it makes necessary is careful selection of material to be studied. A foreign language or mathematics can be identified as specific areas of study in the same way that music or one of the visual arts can be so identified. But there is no reason for any of them to exist in isolation or why appropriate links and cross-reference should not be made between them. Provided that a proper balance can be established between the various areas of study, the subject-based curriculum can be made meaningful and relevant not only to the ablest pupils but to the vast majority.

It is all too possible to become obstinately entrenched behind one or other of these arguments; but some reconciliation between them is essential if we are any longer to conceive of education in this country as a coherent process. Can we identify a few basic criteria for secondary education as a basis for some agreement in principle between traditionalists and progressives?

Criteria for a Balanced Curriculum

I would like to propound the thesis that the curriculum in the secondary school should have one central purpose—personal development—with four interlinked criteria:—

1. The development of skills and aptitudes.

2. Activities involving the study of the material world and of human society.
3. An idealist, inspirational element.
4. Creative and aesthetic experience.

This pattern would, I believe, be understood and accepted by teachers whether in primary, secondary or further education as relevant for pupils or students at any level of ability. The criteria are concerned with the nature and purpose of curriculum content, representing the fulfilment of the principles stated. So the criteria must not be confused with blocks of subjects. No area of study belongs exclusively under one particular heading, nor do I argue that all four criteria should be found in all areas of the school programme all the time. But, at any given stage, a boy's or a girl's programme should be influenced in varying degrees by all of them. The criteria are closely interlinked so that creative/aesthetic experience which I have cited as one of them does not exist in isolation but in close relation to the other three.

First, skills and aptitudes. Physical movement, communication, literacy and numeracy together provide a foundation on which it would be possible to build an entire curriculum. Well co-ordinated physique and ease of communication promote social self-confidence; and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are important to intellectual development. The curriculum could be so geared as to concentrate entirely on the identification and fostering of aptitudes; the motive might be vocational, or to promote leisure time interests, or a mixture of both. Certainly, to encourage a special aptitude or an absorbing interest helps to create self-discipline.

But if this were the sole criterion, and the boys and girls pursued just those activities which they liked best, to the exclusion of all the others, the programme for a great many pupils would become exceedingly narrow. For the able and ambitious, with an eye to university entrance, or entry to a college of art, there would be every inducement to concentrate solely on preparing the ground for examinations. The able and unambitious might well become dilettantes. Meanwhile, for the vast majority of the school population the curriculum would consist of basic skills with little smatterings of interest aroused here and there, nothing lasting for very long. For everyone, the object of the exercise would be utilitarian and self-centred. In other words, this criterion, though basic to the other three, possesses no degree of self-sufficiency.

Studies of the material world and of human society lead the pupils outwards from the immediate environment. They not only help him to understand what lies within the horizon of his experience but are a means of extending this horizon. They attempt to give the future adult a sense of perspective in time and space. This entails helping him to understand the nature of the physical world and the scientific principles which describe it. Such an understanding can only come with the help of the scientist, the mathematician and the geographer, and with a systematic training in the methods of inquiry and recording used in these three branches of study and in studies allied to them. The task of helping growing boys and girls to understand man as a political and social animal is one of even greater complexity. A rich heritage of literature, the whole of human history as far as it is known,

the works of great religious teachers, of the philosophers, of political theorists and economists—all these are available. The difficulty is to distil wisdom from so many sources in such a way that something relevant and comprehensible can be presented. The problem is further complicated by the fact that the newer sciences of psychology and sociology not only re-interpret history and literature but are in process of analysing man as an individual and corporate human behaviour in a far more meticulous and penetrating manner than has ever before been attempted. Hence it is difficult to incorporate them in a school programme but imperative for the wise teacher to take them into account.

Ideals, inspiration, faith are words of consequence in the education of the young. The development of the powers of observation and listening, of reading the written word with understanding, above all the power to reason with logic and to produce a clear and concise argument, is intrinsic to the educational process; but this is not enough. The significance for us of anything which we see or hear or read does not necessarily depend on our capacity to comprehend or interpret; the impact may be on our emotions rather than on our reason, and our response may be intuitive, an expression of something deeply felt. This is the threshold of the most delicate area in human personality, an area which must be entered if the curriculum is to become an effective instrument in the education of the adult citizen. For prejudice springing from ignorance, or where intuitive reactions are caused by misinterpretation of fact, the exercises of clear thinking and training in scientific principle are clearly antidotes. Our concern is rather with something which transcends the realms of analytical thinking.

Teachers may well maintain that processes of clear thinking are beyond the reach of the majority of their pupils; how then can they contemplate a further stage? Is this not all 'sublime mysticism and nonsense'?

The search for truth, for understanding of the purpose of living, for happiness and for peace of mind has preoccupied every generation of thinking people throughout history. It exerts no less a compulsion today than ever it did. To develop individual personal skills, and to help to give adolescent boys and girls their bearings in the material and human situation is surely an arid and infertile business unless the ideals which have been a driving force for good or ill are given due prominence. Admittedly we no longer live in an age when the theologian, the philosopher and the historian are sole arbiters in these matters. The scientist, the economist, the psychologist and the sociologist may now claim to share this role. Scientific discovery and objective analysis may indeed help to ensure economic survival, social stability and security. If the ultimate aim of civilisation were to produce a human society conditioned to live in neatly arranged economic and social patterns, undivided by political controversy, having discarded for good all notions of religion or ideology, there would be no more to be said. But the spirit of man can surely not be so contained. So long as the sanctity of human life and of the human personality remain acknowledged and accepted, man's search for ultimate truth will go on, and his craving for a faith will continue to demand satisfaction in some way or other.

This is the imponderable, unquantifiable element in the curriculum. It raises matters not so much of content as of the attitude, approach and personal convictions of the teacher, who faces a dilemma if he accepts the challenge of the preceding paragraphs. He will be involved in religious and moral questions, as well as with political ideologies. Finding himself inevitably faced with controversial matters, what is his rightful role? If he ventures on a value judgment he may be reasonably asked whose values he is accepting and adopting; if he acts as an impartial chairman, providing evidence to be discussed and letting the debate take its course, he may be asked who chose the evidence and who is to say whether both sides have had a fair crack of the whip. At all events, it must be remembered that boys and girls when they leave school, are thrown into a working and leisure life in which belief and counter belief jostle with each other, where advertisers, dramatic critics, religious bodies, political parties, student movements, racial group movements and many other emotive forces will try to influence them. The school must help them to face this inevitable situation and to avoid the loneliness of being victims to feelings which cannot be understood, and the helplessness of being caught up in the prejudices of the particular group in which they move. And this applies to all boys and girls whatever degree of ability they possess.

The criterion, described rather clumsily as creative and aesthetic experience, appears from observation to be a strong force in the educational process. The course of enthusiasm which drives pupils to accept the discipline of learning a skill is often aesthetic in character. Aesthetic satisfaction can take two forms; either the active involvement of the performer, the artist, or the craftsman, or the more passive but complementary appreciation of the listener, the spectator or the patron/consumer. In either case, sensitivity to sound, to colour, to form, to fine performance or good workmanship involves, sooner or later, a realisation that practice and perseverance must precede achievement. There are spheres outside the arts where the driving force is similar in character; the mathematician may experience delight in algebra, and the scientist in cell formation or crystallography. In these examples the first steps are not aesthetic and the full beauty of the study or activity is only revealed after a great deal of hard work has already been done. It is, however, in the realm of the performing and of the visual arts that the mobilising effect of a discovered interest and the consequent sense of total involvement become particularly apparent. One function of the educational process, fully recognised at the primary stage, is to let loose creative energy and to allow movement, drama, music-making, working with paint or clay to be an integral and dominant part of the school programme.

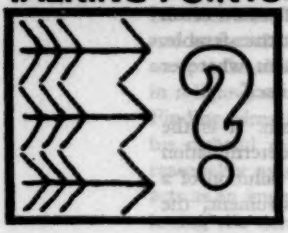
It is a major tragedy at the present time that, in many secondary schools, aesthetics which can generate spontaneous enthusiasm as great if not greater than any other branch of the curriculum should languish at the periphery of the school programme when it ought to flourish at the very centre of it. Most boys and girls are destined to be the audience, spectators; only a minority will be professional artists, actors or athletes. But all can be active participants; listening or watching or viewing need not be passive occupations. We have of course a great deal to learn about transfer of training. We have, for

instance, no evidence that the habit of concentration, generated by enthusiasm, to be found in the art room, the handicraft room or on the playing field or in a music practice room, is in fact transferable. But the atmosphere of total pre-occupation and involvement, wherever it is found in a school, is surely something precious in itself.

The main-spring of the learning process is enthusiasm. It is the combination of skill and enthusiasm which produces the determination to achieve, whether achievement is represented by the solution of a mathematical problem, competence on a musical instrument, the painting of a picture, or clearing a six-foot bar.

Discussion on the 'balanced curriculum' has tended to centre round the amount of time and energy devoted to arts and sciences; but this may be to distort the true nature of the case. In terms of the thesis propounded here the achievement of balance is far more complex. Whether we are concerned with the subtle inter-relationship of the intuitive and rational processes, the contrasting claims of rights and duties, or with weighing the importance of preparing pupils for their working life against that of preparing them for a profitable and enjoyable use of leisure time, the true balancing agent lies not in the subject content but in the methods and approaches of the teacher and his inter-reaction with the pupils. Strictly speaking there can be no such thing as a balanced curriculum; but the total effect of a wisely devised curriculum, well handled by the teacher, may be to give boys and girls the diversity of experience which the education of the whole man demands.

TALKING POINTS



By Question Master

Sex Education in Primary Schools

Widely differing views are still held about the place of sex education in primary schools. A fairly general attitude among parents and teachers is that questions about sex should be answered frankly from the earliest years. Many parents and teachers seek opportunities in the child's play and even in formal lessons to provide experiences which prompt questions so that the necessary basic information about reproduction, including mammalian reproduction, can be given. Those who take this line feel it is important to provide every child, before puberty is reached, with a vocabulary of acceptable terms to use in talking about reproduction. They feel he should also have some understanding of how life is handed on and some facts about the varying spans of life of living things. This can be done without giving the topic the undesirable limelight which comes from treating it in isolation and giving it specific attention. It can arise naturally in the general context of health education or of nature study when children who are, perhaps, caring for living creatures kept in captivity about the school, look enquiringly into the life processes of movement, feeding, growth, sensitivity and reproduction.

As children are forgetful and their interests often short-lived, this process of building up background knowledge and settling questions satisfactorily must be a continuous one. It will start in the earliest years, often arising from questions about pets kept at home or at school. The skill of the wise teacher or parent lies in knowing how far to go in building on the passing interest of the child.

Some would argue that it is time enough to provide this background information, particularly some direct consideration of human reproduction, in the pupils' first year in secondary schools and many schools do provide a substantial element of biology in their introductory general science courses with this aim in view. A headmaster in a northern grammar school for boys was told by the boys that they thought thirteen early enough for such work.

The argument sometimes put forward that the earlier physical maturity of children makes it essential for parents and teachers to meet the need for sex education at the primary stage of education is not a strong one as the normal age for the onset of puberty in boys is still between fourteen and fifteen and for girls between twelve and thirteen. Nevertheless many parents and teachers do consider that a set course of lessons should be provided and that the behavioural and moral aspects of sex education should be openly discussed in primary school. They take the view that each year a few primary school children undergo the first physical and emotional changes of adolescence and that this experience is not far ahead for most of the pupils. They feel something should be done to prepare them for these changes.

In some schools someone, often the head teacher, takes on the duty of deliberately attempting to help the children understand the simple facts of human reproduction—the part played by each parent and the pattern of development of the baby. He also undertakes some discussion of the role of hormones in development, the control they exert over the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics and the onset of ovulation, menstruation, spermatogenesis and nocturnal emissions. He also stimulates some discussion of the much more complex matters of the developing attitudes to sex of boys and girls as they mature. Discussions of this nature would usually lead to statements about moral attitudes taken up by the church and by many adults.

Work of this nature on human reproduc-

tion is probably comparatively rare in primary schools. Possibly most parents and teachers would feel it is still too early to arouse curiosity to this extent. The Plowden Committee felt strongly that the ethical and biological aspects of sex are best dealt with in the family at home. The few children maturing early will be girls and if they are prepared for the onset of menstruation so that the shock which comes from complete ignorance at the first occurrence is avoided, little more than a talk about the practical side of the hygienic steps to be taken need be attempted. Some would go further and take the line that many children have an inherent modesty about these matters and this should not be shattered. They would also claim that it is wrong to arouse interest in the sexual relations of adults among immature pupils of ten years old as some may find the knowledge shocking and hurtful if crudely presented. In their view such advice on personal relationships as seems necessary is best given by personal counselling for the need is often a personal and individual one.

The extreme view is probably inappropriate in certain circumstances because classes are large and the background of pupils so varied. Many mass media are at work to arouse interest in sex matters and children acquire knowledge and even something of their code of values from so many sources outside the school or home. Perhaps the middle of the road attitude which accepts the duty of the primary school teacher, in partnership with the parent, to provide some basic information for pupils, is the right one. Some schools may feel, that they should go further than this, attempting to prepare children for mental, emotional and physical changes which lie ahead. A number of books on this subject are now available to children and their parents, including one by a primary school headmaster, based on the lessons he has been giving to his fourth year pupils for some years. An attempt at an exhaustive, once and for all treatment of the subject is obviously inappropriate in the primary school. A child's curiosity, like his memory, is often short-lived. His questions should receive frank answers but is it not advisable, also, that they should be brief?

By what means should the interest, support and indeed the co-operation of parents be obtained?

Should all members of staff be aware of their responsibility to contribute or should it be a special assignment? What guidance and training is available for those specially concerned?

Finally it is worth asking whether primary teachers generally are in agreement with what is said on the subject in the Plowden report (Paras. 720–721): 'From time to time teachers in primary schools will come across manifestations of what is often called "An unhealthy interest in sex" . . . we feel quite sure that such manifestations should not be taken too seriously. . . . They represent much more a response to adult attitudes than any undesirable sexual precocity.'

Exchange Visits

A decade has passed since World Refugee Year. Much of what was then done by English schools has been forgotten. But a few of the enterprises inspired by an imaginative world movement to focus attention on the needs of refugees and on re-settlement problems have continued in an unobtrusive way. One such has been kept going over the years by a small group of teachers and by many pupils and their parents in Dorset.

In World Refugee Year the Schools Athletic Association of Poole and District was moved to take part in a festival of sport and dancing held near Munich. Many such events took place but the significance of this centred on the place at which the festival took place and the lasting results it had. The place was Dachau: the result was ten years of family to family exchange visits for the pupils of English schools and of the school established by the Munich education authority in the refugee village of Ludwigsfeld.

The world associates the stain that attaches to the name of Dachau with its concentration camp. Within three miles of it the German war machine constructed another vast camp to house the forced

labour assembled from all over Europe, but particularly from the east. On this site after the war a refugee village was built with its own school. By 1959 there were 3,000 displaced persons in Ludwigsfeld of whom just over half were Germans from the Eastern zone; the remainder consisted of Poles, Ukrainians, Latvians and, in all, representatives of 20 different nationalities.

The first visit of the Poole boys to Ludwigsfeld lasted for a week. The people and the conditions under which they lived made a deep impression on the boys and even more on the young schoolmasters who were with them. It was not so much the material circumstances (although grim relics of the former squalor still remained), as the social and psychological deprivations of the displaced persons that aroused this concern. The warmth with which the English visitors were welcomed, the sense of newfound freedom, the attachment of the displaced persons to the religion and the national customs of their own countries made a great impact on all.

In the years that followed many such friendships were forged. A series of inter-change visits was arranged so that every spring a party of Poole's boys and girls went to Ludwigsfeld and every summer the children of the refugee village were entertained in Poole. It was immediately realised that the greatest value of the inter-change lay in making arrangements for the children to stay in each other's homes. Numerous social events and extensive sight-seeing programmes were of course arranged in both countries, but it was on the experience gained by the children of each other's family circles and on the friendships that grew up between the adult members of the parties, that the success of all this enterprise most depended.

The material recovery of Germany in the last ten years, the leading part played in the development of Ludwigsfeld by teachers and others who were refugees or displaced persons, the generosity of the Munich Education Authority, which paid the full cost of the visits to England—all these were factors that impressed the English. It was amply demonstrated that the horizons of the children were widened and that they obtained fresh insights into the lives of other peoples. The visit made to Germany in 1968 took on a special significance because it commemorated the 10th anniversary of the exchanges. The Poole party of 25 children and adults were entertained to lunch in the Rathaus at Munich and addressed by the Director of Education. It was apparent that the German authorities warmly appreciated the work that had been done and which owed its initiative to the Poole teachers and to one in particular who had accompanied every party and taken a major share of responsibility for arrangements.

What was the success of the Poole/Dachau inter-change due to?

Perhaps first to the special purpose and occasion of the early visits. The particular need felt by the refugees for contact and friendship outside Germany was very apparent. Their response to the first approach was movingly warm. This enabled the idea of personal relationships across national frontiers and family to family exchanges to take root. As far as possible these exchanges have been conducted on an informal family basis rather than in an institutional, school-based manner. That the children should stay in each other's homes and be accepted as members of each other's families for the ten-day period of the visit was all-important. Poole is not an exceptionally favoured or affluent area and most of the children concerned lived on a new estate to which families had moved from condemned housing in the centre of the town. Nevertheless the visits of the German children were always welcomed by the many families involved in them. Relations between the schools whose teachers undertook the organisation and these parents were greatly strengthened.

The age of the children is an important factor. After various experiments children of 12–13 have proved the most suitable for the exchange visits. Activity is all-important to children of this age and family ties are still strong. Energy is seemingly inexhaustible and the absence of self-consciousness mitigates the language difficulties.

Gifted Children—The Brentwood Experiment

Editor: S. A. Bridges

Pitman 25s.

The Gifted Child

Editor: J. B. Shields

N.F.E.R. 8s.

Backwardness and Educational Failure

Editor: R. Gulliford

N.F.E.R. 10s.

Teachers of younger children are, by and large, not well equipped, nor well prepared, to meet the special needs of gifted children. While the difficulties which children encounter in learning are being increasingly well charted on behalf of the teacher, the more positive attributes of the very able have been somewhat neglected so that, in the face of genius, teachers, like most of us, are inclined to lose confidence and turn away. The book from Brentwood describes an attempt to redress the balance.

It describes work over some three years in which children selected for their high general ability were brought together at the college for a half day session each week throughout the college year. Although an attempt was made to identify children with high creative ability, special gifts, musical for instance, were not looked for. From the relatively rich resources of the college they were offered a range of opportunities for work in a variety of fields with their intellectual peers, while a large enough number of adults, staff and students, were on hand to guide and stimulate their activities and to observe the nature and pattern they assumed.

Those concerned at the college should be congratulated on the setting up of the 'experiment' but this account leaves a vague dissatisfaction. As the authors would agree —they are very modest in their claims— 'experiment' is a misnomer. No problem is defined; no hypothesis put forward and no control set up. More regrettably, perhaps, there is no evident unity of approach or purpose.

The declared objective—to give students some direct experience of very able children—is entirely commendable and was evidently achieved to their considerable advantage. But this in itself hardly justifies the publication of a book. What we are offered beyond a general introduction to the project is a number of separate accounts of the work done with the children in the various fields open to them. These give us some interesting little insights into their behaviour but few firm conclusions. The reader is left to derive a consensus from the symposium and this proves difficult and not very rewarding.

The teacher's major problem remains and is clearly illustrated in something to which the book makes repeated reference. This is the disturbing readiness of many able children to adapt their effort to the demands made on them, which means, for much of their time in school, they coast easily along with half their potential unemployed. The problem has a double aspect. In one it is probably a matter of school staffing and organisation. In the other it is that of finding the right kind of material and incentive to absorb the children's whole resources and one hopes the college will continue its work to this end and inspire other colleges to join it. The publication is justified if it does that.

For a more systematic account we may turn to Mr Shields' book which gives a useful summary of the major investigation into the characteristics of gifted children carried out within the past forty years. There is modest reference to the work he carried out himself with children in the North of England in co-operation with Professor Lovell.

These children lay roughly in the same age band as those at Brentwood and one

detects here harder evidence for the more tentative observations of the college tutors —the extensive vocabulary, the voracious appetite for books, the wide and mature interests, the capacity to play with ideas, including mathematical ones, and the delight in conversation but, throughout, the need to remember we are still concerned with children. Evidence for 'creativity' at this age seems somewhat elusive and there is a marked unevenness in their mental development which adds still more to the difficulties of meeting their intellectual needs and to the dangers of reading too much into their surprising achievements.

This has, perhaps, peculiar relevance to work in science which able children appear to find attractive. In the Brentwood account we are given a somewhat involved essay on the nature of science and the scientific method into which, one presumes, the children's activities are required to fit. Reference is made, too, to the scientific vocabulary the children acquire in the course of their reading, but Mr. Shields' investigation reveals that the meaning of this vocabulary rests on a prolonged excursion through the scientific processes.

It is not easy to give science a proper significance for these children but it might be more appropriate to distinguish two kinds of scientific activity: the one which involves a systematic study of recorded science, highly formalised and requiring a mature capacity for logical thought, and the other which requires the exercise of imaginative insight into the multitude of things and events which make up our natural environment—an exercise which can be conducted at any level of scientific understanding. With children, even bright ones, it would never move far from the things themselves but it would feed curiosity and provide the basic experience on which a capacity for abstract thought can later flourish.

In this, as in other activities, these children appear to need the sympathetic presence of adults who must be able to match their own lively curiosity, keen perception, sense of humour and love of words and, though wise to its ways, can still look at the world with the fresh eye of a child. Poets and artists, perhaps, rather than scientists.

Mr. Gulliford's book is a companion to that of Mr. Shields but is concerned with children at the other end of the ability range.

It takes us quickly and easily on a survey of the more recent work on the learning difficulties encountered by children, what is known about the sources of them and what might be done to overcome them. To cover such a vast field in such a small compass as this book offers is a dubious undertaking but the author is prepared to take the risk and something of value emerges. He has himself worked in the field and provides for each section references to recent researches and, for the book as a whole, a substantial bibliography. For the student or the busy teacher it provides a short but reliable introduction to the nature of the problems and the paths taken to their solution. Both student and teacher must be prepared to go further but the book is a very useful starting point, well written and well produced. As with Mr. Shields' book one can see here an encouraging beginning to the necessary process of translating educational research into classroom practice.

P.P.